513, 575, 561 Gond AW32

/Information concerning the _ghotul_ or _gotul_, the bachelors' and adolescents' dormitory, will be found in category 883, _Adolescent Activities._ /

000

THE MARIA GONDS OF BASTAR

By

SIR WILFRID GRIGSON

With an Introduction by

J. H. HUTTON, C.I.E., D.Sc.

Professor of Social Anthropology in the University of Cambridge

REISSUED IN 1949
with a Supplement containing 80 pages
of additional matter and 39 illustrations
by the Author and Verrier Elwin

GEOFFREY CUMBERLEGE
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

[p. iii]

[pp. i and ii are blank]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
~~Bison Horn Maria~~

142
291
301

HILL MARIA YOUTH AND GIRL
(Photograph by Baron E. von Eickstedt

[facing p. iii]

[Frontispiece

000

To the Peoples of Bastar
and
To my Companions in Bastar
1927-31

[p. vi is blank]

[p. v]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
~~Hill Maria~~
~~Bison Horn Maria~~

000

Oxford University Press, Amen House, London, E.C.4
GLASGOW NEW YORK TORONTO MELBOURNE WELLINGTON
BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS CAPE TOWN
Geoffrey Cumberlege, Publisher to the University

First published 1938
Reissued, with a Supplement 1949

[p. iv]

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY HEADLEY BROTHERS
109 KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C.2; AND ASHFORD, KENT

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
~~Hill Maria~~
~~Bison Horn Maria~~

000

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE
INTRODUCTION xi
PREFACE xv

PART I

INTRODUCTORY

BASTAR STATE AND ITS PEOPLES; THE HISTORICAL, GEOGRAPHIC AND ETHNOGRAPHIC SETTING OF THE MARIAS 1

CHAPTER I

THE SETTING IN TIME; THE HISTORICAL ISOLATION OF BASTAR 3

CHAPTER II

THE SETTING IN SPACE; THE PHYSICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE GEOGRAPHY OF BASTAR 21

CHAPTER III

THE ETHNOLOGICAL SETTING; THE PRIMITIVE RACES OF BASTAR .. 35

PART II

PERSONAL APPEARANCE AND CHARACTERISTICS

CHAPTER IV

PERSONAL APPEARANCE; PHYSICAL POWERS AND ENDURANCE; BODILY ATTITUDES; CLEANLINESS; HAIR-DRESSING; DRESS AND ORNAMENTS OF (A) HILL, (B) BISON-HORN MARIAS; WEAPONS AND TOOLS 61

CHAPTER V

CHARACTER 91

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32

~~Hill Maria~~

~~Bison-Horn Maria~~

000

PART III

DOMESTIC LIFE AND ECONOMY

CHAPTER VI

PAGE
VILLAGES, HOUSES AND THEIR CONTENTS 101
A. HILL MARIAS 101
B. BISON-HORN MARIAS 118

CHAPTER VII

AGRICULTURE 125

CHAPTER VIII

PROCURING OF OTHER FOOD AND DRINK 151
A. FOOD GATHERING 151
B. HUNTING AND TRAPPING 154
C. DOMESTICATION OF ANIMALS 161
D. FISHING 163
E. INTOXICANTS AND OTHER DRINKS 168

CHAPTER IX

DOMESTIC LIFE; MISCELLANEOUS 172
A. TREATMENT OF SICKNESS 172
B. MANUFACTURES 174
C. MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS 181
D. DANCING. 1. HILL MARIA 183
2. BISON-HORN MARIA 185
E. OTHER AMUSEMENTS 186
F. RECKONING TIME 187
G. DAILY ROUTINE 188
H. FIRE-MAKING 189

PART IV

RELIGION AND MAGIC

CHAPTER X

THE EARTH, THE CLAN-GOD AND THE VILLAGE MOTHER 193

CHAPTER XI

THE ANNUAL RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES OF THE BISON-HORN MARIAS .. 208

000

CHAPTER XII

PAGE
THE CULT OF THE DEPARTED; MAGIC AND WITCHCRAFT; OMENS; BELIEFS ABOUT THE PHENOMENA OF NATURE 222

PART V

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION, LAW AND CUSTOM

CHAPTER XIII

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION; THE PHRATRIES AND CLANS 233

CHAPTER XIV

MARRIAGE 244

CHAPTER XV

BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD 263
A. HILL MARIAS 263
B. BISON-HORN MARIAS 269

CHAPTER XVI

DEATH AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES 271
A. HILL MARIAS 271
B. BISON-HORN MARIAS 279

CHAPTER XVII

VILLAGE, CLAN AND PARGANA AUTHORITIES AND PANCHAYATS; THEIR EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY; THEIR JUDICIAL AUTHORITY AND METHODS; PROPERTY AND INHERITANCE; POSITION OF WOMEN; THE RECENT STATE ORDERS RESTORING JUDICIAL AUTHORITY TO PANCHAYATS .. 284

APPENDIXES

I. ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS OF BASTAR STATE 299
II. LISTS OF HILL MARIA CLANS AND BISON-HORN MARIA CLANS AND PHRATRIES, AND PEDIGREE OF THE HILL MARIA FAMILY HOLDING THE HEREDITARY HEADMANSHIP OF CHHOTA DONGAR PARGANA AND ORCHA VILLAGE 300
III. HILL MARIA TERMS OF RELATIONSHIP 308
IV. NAMES OF MEN AND WOMEN 310
V. ANTHROPOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF THE HILL AND BISON-HORN MARIAS, BY MR. R. C. ROY 312
VI. LANGUAGE 319
VII. GLOSSARY OF VERNACULAR TERMS 331
VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY 337

[p. x is blank]

000

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PLATE — PAGE

Hill Maria Youth and Girl .. .. .. *frontispiece*
I Map of Bastar State—Natural Divisions .. 20
II (1) The Chitrakot Falls of the River Indrawati
(2) Confluence of Rivers Indrawati and Komra, Border of Bastar and Chanda
(3) The Aranpur Pass .. .. *facing* 22
III Map of Bastar State—Political Divisions .. 29
IV Bastar State Ethnographic Map 40
V (1) and (2) A Hill Maria, of the Gond Type. Usendi Muka of Orcha
(3) Group of Hill Maria Girls .. .. .. *facing* 62
VI (1) Full-face, Jugho Chero, of Itulnar
(2) Hill Maria of Handawada
(3) Kutru Mar Youths, wearing Taghali Bark Overcoats .. .. *facing* 70
VII (1) and (2) Hill Maria Dancers; (2) shows the use of Bark Rain-coat as Dancing Skirt
(3) Hill Maria Dancers, showing Dancing-Shields and Bunches of Pellet-Bells worn over the rump
(4) A Hill Maria of Kurmer, using his Rain-Hat and Rain-Shield, as he works with his Gudari Digging Hoe .. .. *facing* 74
VIII Bison-Horn Maria Dancers .. .. *facing* 78
IX Bison-Horn Maria Dancers at Bailadila:
Above, Four Men
Below, Women, showing the Clothes, the Masses of Ornaments, and the Tirdudi Bamboo Dancing-Staves .. .. *facing* 80
X (1) The Village Mother's Shrine at Orcha
(2) The Village Mother at Handawada .. *facing* 110
XI (1) Hill Maria Women carrying Gourds of Water
(2) Hill Maria Woman carrying a Leaf-Box of Grain
(3) Bison-Horn Maria Village Street, Telam, near Katakalian .. .. *facing* 118
XII Plans of Bison-Horn Maria Village and House 121
XIII Hill Maria Penda Field, just Harvested, Dudmarka, Kutru Mar .. .. *facing* 132

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32

~~Hill Maria~~

~~Bison-Horn Maria~~

000

PLATE PAGE

XIV Tondawada, Hill Maria Dam for Rice Cultivation:
  Above, Downstream Face
  Below, Upstream Face .. .. *facing* 146

XV (1) Hill Maria Dancers
  (2) Hill Maria Domestic Life. Fetching Water from River .. .. *facing* 184

XVI The Sacrifice before the Wijj-Weta. The Offerings before the Altar of Bows .. .. *facing* 211

XVII Hill Maria Types:
  Above, Arki Baiyya of Korawaya; Gecha Pola of Chudala Tondawada
  Below, Jugho Buke of Itulnar; Guma Ewado of Goti .. .. *facing* 226

XVIII Bison-Horn Maria Types:
  Above, Markami Harma of Burgum: Markami Joga, Headman of Burgum
  Below, Mase, Wife of Markami Muka of Kakadi *facing* 240

XIX (1) The Pouring of Water over the Bridegroom and Bride at the Bison-Horn Maria Wedding described at Page 258
  (2) An old Bison-Horn Maria from Gudra, between Katakalian and Kuakonda .. .. .. *facing* 254

XX Hill Maria Death Ceremonies:
  (1) Mourning over a Corpse, Handawada
  (2) Keening for a Dead Woman, Bhera Tondawada
  (3) Burial Grave at Nugur, Kutru Mar .. *facing* 274

XXI Bison-Horn Maria Memorials to the Dead:
  (1) Uras-gatta Post, near Chitrakot Falls
  (2) Danya-kal and Uras-kal Stones, Aranpur *facing* 280

XXII Uras-kal Stones on Dantewara-Baila Dila Road *facing* 282

XXIII Hill Maria Panchayat, Itulnar, showing religious and Secular Headmen seated on Stone Udam-garya Seats .. .. *facing* 290

FIGURE PAGE

1 Antagarh Tahsil, divided into Parganas 33

2 Hill Maria Arrows 86

3 Hill Maria Bowman, showing Method of Release 87

4 Hill Maria Axe, Hoe and Digging Iron; Bison Horn Maria Hoe 89

5 Map of Karangul Village of the Parllo Hill Maria Clan .. 105

6 Parish Map of Handawada .. .. *facing* 108

7 Ground Plan of Three Hill Maria Houses 111

8 Hill Maria Panther-Trap, Handawada 157

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

INTRODUCTION

114 It is very remarkable that Indian administrators and British anthropologists should have had to wait a century for any detailed authoritative account of the Gonds of Central India. It may also be said to have been very unfortunate that we should have had to wait so long, though that misfortune is much mitigated by the excellence of the monographs that we have just received from Verrier Elwin and, in particular, from Mr. Grigson. What one regrets most is that an earlier study of the Gonds might have prevented much suffering and many misfortunes, at least, that is, if it had led to the taking of measures in their interests such as Mr. Grigson was able to initiate in Bastar State during the term of his office there as Administrator and Diwan.

It is hardly necessary for me to say anything of Mr. Grigson's qualifications for writing of the Maria Gonds of that State: those qualifications will be self-evident to the discerning reader of the book which follows. But it should be placed on record that Mr. Grigson has succeeded in initiating measures to restore the jurisdiction of village *panchayats*, to restrict the alienation of villages to foreigners from outside by abolishing the *thehadari* system, to put an end to oppressive and vexatious interference by police and other petty officials with the life of the Maria village. For it is the very high privilege of that altogether too rare individual the anthropologically-minded administrative officer, that he can often bring practical benefits to the subjects of his studies as well as informative benefits to the readers he instructs.

It is obvious that this monograph on the Gonds of Bastar reveals a fusion of cultures which has not only taken place in the past but is going on in the present. The author himself draws attention to the difference between the cultures of the Bison-horn and of the Abujhmar Marias, and ascribes them to successive waves of Gond immigrants, as well as to the more recent encroachments of 000 Hinduism. But this is not the whole of the picture, and without offering any attempt at an analysis of the Bastar cultures it is perhaps permissible to point out certain parallels and to suggest an inference or two. Mr. Ramesh Chandra Roy, dealing in Appendix V with the physical side of the Gond problem, suggests the existence of three elements, a pre-Dravidian element conveniently labelled 'proto-australoid' by Sewell and Veddaic by others—Eickstedt calls it 'Veddid'—which is dolichocephalic, prognathous and

000 platyrrhine; a Dravidian element, which some would prefer to call Mediterranean—dolichocephalic leptorrhine; and a slight brachycephalic element, which Mr. Roy is clearly inclined to ascribe to an alpine or palaeo-alpine source rather than a mongoloid one. He states that, although he found instances of oblique eyes, he never found a case of the epicanthic fold in Bastar. Personally, I am still unconvinced. My own impression of the Marias is that there is a slight but definite mongoloid element. Of course, these impressions are merely the result of optical observation, and unsupported by any sort of scientific measurement, and it is possible that I have been prejudiced by a certain psychological resemblance between the Marias and their neighbours and the submongoloid hillmen of Assam.

171 Culturally, the parallels afforded by the Maria Gonds are often interesting and suggestive, though it is possible here to mention only a few. Some of them are definitely reminiscent of tribes farther south in the peninsula. Thus the use of separate huts or shelters for the segregation of menstruating women is a custom shared with several of the Travancore hill tribes, while the objection to performing the sexual act inside a dwelling is shared with the Kadar of Cochin State, and probably with other tribes. It may perhaps be referred to a period when, as with the Andamanese to-day, the only permanent dwelling-house was an unpartitioned communal hut.

Other traits there are which recall tribes of Munda affinities. The association of peacocks with the dead and the use of kettle-drums and dish-shaped gongs are shared with the Munda-speaking Sawara of the Madras Agency Tracts, and the use of the multiple cord belts for women with the Bondo Parja of the same area and with the Chagyik Konyak of the Naga hills in Assam, items of culture, of course, which may just as well have passed from west to east as vice versa, or which may merely have been drawn by various tribes from a common source. The practices of erecting a dolmen as a seat for a village elder, for the 'Village Mother' or for the ghost of a dead person to sit on, a circle of stones for the village *panchayat* and a memorial menhir in the village of ancestral origin, together with a belief in a collective clan soul and what amounts to a form of ancestor-worship recall very strongly the Sawara, Munda and Khasi cultures, while they link up with other similar practices of the megalithic cultures farther east, e.g. in the Naga hills, Mentawi, Farther Asia generally and even the Pacific. The same group of cultures is again suggested by the use of a communal bachelors' hall, of the sago palm and of grass rain-coats, by stilt-walking and by the making of fire by means of a fire-saw instead of a drill. This particular fire-saw used by Mr. Grigson's Marias would seem to be much nearer the original implement than the saw-thong form used in Assam or (e.g.) Borneo, for the Maria fire-saw needs three men to manipulate it, while one Naga or Kayan can make fire with a thong worked by his two hands under a hearth held in place by one foot, the Mikir and Nicobarese types, usually worked by two men, forming links between the Maria and the Naga types. On the other hand, Maria ceremonial fire *must* apparently be obtained from an existing household fire ; the Naga tribes, on the contrary, must employ thong-ignited need-fire, while their neighbours the Kuki tribes, who seldom use such an apparatus, may obtain it from flint and steel, but not from matches. One is tempted to infer a reminiscence of a time when the making of fire was unknown in the Abujhmar hills, as in the Andaman islands, and the importation of a primitive form of the fire-saw which has developed elsewhere into a simpler and more useful apparatus. In contrast to the fire-saw the Maria blacksmith's bellows have South Indian and African rather than Indonesian affinities, while the bamboo ideochord is not played by the Maria, as by the Thado or the Kayan, by plucking the raised bark ' strings ' but by tapping them, making the instrument in their hands rather a xylophone than a guitar.

Reference has already been made to the megalithic culture of the Maria, now apparently rapidly decaying. Here again, much is suggestive of various Assam and Indonesian cultures. Menhirs are transported as by Lhota Nagas and erected as by the Angami, while stone cists are put up by the village path. Seed is fertilized with blood, suggesting not only the Khond *meriah* sacrifice, but also the general theory underlying the head-hunting practices of Naga, Wa, Kayan, Igorot or Taigal from Assam to Formosa. A water-dwelling snake-demon like that of the Maria pervades Thado superstition ; shooting stars are ' star dung ' alike to the Sema Naga and the Maria ; like the Maria, the Ao Naga dances with bells on his buttocks. That incest and other breaches of taboo are visited on the offenders or their kin by man-eating tigers is a typical Naga belief, and the inheritance of his father's house by the youngest son a common Naga practice, though Mr. Grigson's account of it among his Gonds suggests that the reason is to be found in the small value of the building and site, which would certainly not hold good for the Angami. The capture of fish by beating noxious or intoxicating plant juices into the river, like the use of beetle grubs for food, is a very widespread practice indeed, but there is something particularly suggestive of Tibeto-Burmese affinities in the termination of so many Maria clan names in *-mi*, which in Naga or Kuki languages means ' men '. Indeed, several of these Maria clan names, e.g.

171 *Wachami*, are so like those of Naga clans as to tempt one to infer a connexion from a similarity or even identity which is probably merely fortuitous.

000 More than enough has probably been said to indicate to the reader the interest and importance of the work that follows. It is only to be regretted that no written word, even of Mr. Grigson himself nor yet even his admirable illustrations, can convey the peculiar attraction the Maria has for the stranger that enters into his gates, an attraction sensible at once even to a casual visitor among them, such as I have been, and obviously felt very strongly by the author of the monograph that follows. Let him now speak for himself.

J. H. Hutton

Cambridge

October 11th, 1936

PREFACE

THE Administration of Bastar State has generously subsidized the 122
publication of this book, and for this practical sympathy I must thank Colonel Meek, the Agent to the Governor-General for the Eastern States, and Mr. E. S. Hyde, I.C.S., Administrator of Bastar State. I hope that it will not be the last book to be written about the Marias. More systematic field-work will without doubt correct and supplement many of my statements; I shall be content if my book tempts any trained worker to visit the ethnologically unexplored lands of Bastar and Jeypore.

My four years as Administrator of Bastar State kept me busy 114
in camp and office with administrative problems of all kinds. The
primary object of my enquiries was to ascertain grievances, especially 123
those caused by the adoption in a primitive State of criminal, civil and revenue laws framed for British Indian districts some centuries more 'advanced'. In getting the aboriginal to show me his house and his possessions, in watching his domestic and agricultural routine, and in attending his simple social and religious ceremonies I found the readiest path to his confidence and to appreciation of his real feelings about the administration. Question begat counter-question, and attempts to explain the domestic life of the English
to Marias were interesting and amusing. If because I was primarily 114
an administrator I have sometimes dwelt at length on administrative problems, I do not repent: for, despite such views as those advanced by Mr. N. M. Joshi and Mr. M. S. Aney in the Indian Legislative Assembly debate of February 18th, 1936, on the areas to be wholly or partially excluded under the recent Government of India Act, when they heartily damned all anthropologists as wishing to keep the primitive races of India 'uncivilized' and 'in a state of barbarism' as raw material for their science and 'in order to add to their blessed stock of scientific knowledge', anthropology has a very practical value to all charged with the administration of other races if it can discover the thoughts and need of those races. The results of the divorce of administration from anthropology as seen in the system of land revenue, police and judicial administration applied to the Maria tracts of Bastar have been as strikingly revealed on a larger scale by the post-1919 attempts in Bombay and the Central Provinces to force prohibition upon the Bhil, the Gond and the Korku.

Few now are the regions of India where the white man is unknown, and fewer still those in which the Hindu has not yet

114 settled. The Hill Maria and part of the Bison-horn Maria country are such regions; and often in our stay in Bastar my wife and I were able to recapture something of the surprise and variety of experience that our pioneer ancestors knew so much more than their descendants of these humdrum and standardized days. This alone would justify some record of what we saw.

000 For encouragement to attempt such a record I must first thank His Excellency Sir Montagu Butler, K.C.S.I., C.B., C.I.E., C.V.O., C.B.E., now Lieutenant-Governor of the Isle of Man, for nine years Governor of the Central Provinces and in political charge of the Central Provinces States, to whom I owed my appointment as Administrator of Bastar, and who was the wisest and most helpful of chiefs and the best and most stimulating of friends. Mr. R. A. Wilson, who was then Chief Secretary to the Government of the Central Provinces, wrote to me suggesting a study of the Marias even before I went to Bastar. I am very grateful also for the advice and encouragement of three friends: Dr. J. H. Hutton, C.I.E., I.C.S., the last Census Commissioner for India, who has put me further in his debt by reading through my manuscript and contributing so interesting an Introduction; Baron Egon von Eickstedt, Professor of Ethnology at Breslau University, who visited Bastar while I was there and has kindly allowed me to reproduce some of his excellent photographs; and the Right Reverend Alex Wood, D.D., O.B.E., Lord Bishop of Nagpur, the doyen of Gondi scholars and sanest of critics. My interest in the Gond, first aroused by contact with him in the Nagpur, Seoni and Hoshangabad districts, was stimulated by early talks with Mr. C. G. Chenevix Trench, C.I.E., then serving in the Central Provinces Commission, the author of a fascinating Gondi grammar and of certain contributions to Blackwood which vividly portray the Indian aboriginal, and by that mine of ethnological material, Russell and Hiralal's *Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces*. I have in the succeeding pages often disagreed with their statements on Marias in their article 'Gond'; but theirs was a pioneer work, being largely a compilation of statements gleaned from a mass of papers contributed by officials, pleaders and others, supplemented by the personal enquiries of the authors and their wide knowledge of almost all that had been previously written on their subjects. Mistakes and mis-statements were thus inevitable; but their great book is remarkable for its general reliability, its sustained interest and its power of stimulating further investigation.

[126] 114 I must state how I made my enquiries. Throughout my time in Bastar I kept notes and took photographs of what I heard or saw. Between 1927 and 1931 I made four long tours among the Hill

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

Marias, and paid several shorter visits to the fringes of their hills; since 1931 I have three times revisited Bastar, seeing some Marias each time, and spending March 1934 in revisiting the Abujhmar hills villages seen in my 1929-31 tours, and the Bison-horn Maria villages above and below the Aranpur pass. I had similarly often toured before across the Bison-horn Maria country, and made many friends among the villages around the Bailadila hills, which, in return for a reduced assessment of land revenue, had the duty of sending relays of men up to the hills during the summer recess there of the Ruling Chief and leading State officials. 111

Notes and Queries on Anthropology, published by the Royal Anthropological Institute, was of constant value, even though, as explained in Chapter XIII, the poor memories of the Marias prevented me from getting the results expected from the geneological method. My work made it impossible for me to be in Maria villages at all seasons and to see all Maria ceremonies, and therefore I supplemented my enquiries by getting detailed reports from selected State officials whom I tried to train roughly for this by taking them with me during my personal enquiries on tour. I have almost always checked their reports by personal investigation; and in the few cases where I could not so check them, I have repeated nothing reported by them unless it was confirmed by the independent reports of two or more other reliable observers. These enquiries did impose much extra work on them, but gave them a much-needed knowledge of the aboriginal and did much to raise the morale and co-operation of the enquirers and to raise the standard of the administration. I could not have had a happier and friendlier family of colleagues than those of all ranks who served under me my last two years in the State. All were helpful, but especially Pandit Ghasiram Dane, then a subdivisional officer, the late Mr. H. N. Dutt, then tahsildar of Dantewara, since a victim of blackwater fever, Mr. Niranjan Singh, then tahsildar of Bijapur and manager of Kutru, now Assistant Administrator, Mr. Sant Prasad, formerly tahsildar of Konta, Circle Inspector Manbahal Singh of the State Police, and Mr. Dikshitulu of the State Medical Service, who did remarkable anti-yaws work in the Abujhmar hills in my second tour and in later independent tours. 114 126 000

Language was always a difficulty. Halbi is the *lingua franca* of Bastar. The differences between Maria dialects are great, and the very guttural hill dialect is so unintelligible to the Bison-horn Marias that at their rare meetings they communicate with Hill Marias through those of them who understand Halbi. And there are many variations of both the Hill and the Bison-horn Maria dialects. Of Halbi, everyone serving in Bastar must acquire some 197

197 understanding. Of Gondi as spoken in the plateaux of the Central Provinces I had a smattering, but the Maria dialects were as different from it as Spanish and Portuguese from Italian, and the Hill Maria gutturals are beyond the compass of an English voice. Yet one cannot but acquire a considerable vocabulary and power of 124 following the gist of a speech from constant hearing of witnesses in court and association with tribesmen in village and camp; and thus, though never able to dispense with an interpreter, I could check his interpretation of replies, and see that he put my questions in my own way, and not in a leading form. Nothing needs more care than the training of interpreters. I am especially grateful for the 000 help, as interpreter and as enquirer, of the late Circle Inspector Chaitan Singh, of the State Police, a Bastar Rajput with all the traditional virtues of the Rajput. Descended from an ancestor who had once narrowly escaped being sacrificed as a Meriah victim in Jeypore (Orissa), he was passionately interested in the aboriginal, knew all the '36' languages of Bastar, was a mine of information about Bastar customs, religions, songs, dances and games, and was, because he never did an injustice but was simple and reliable in all his ways, loved by the wild tribes of Bastar. His sense of humour, broad like that of the tribesmen, of whom at heart he was one, would overcome disappointment or the short temper bred of heat and exhaustion in gales of laughter; nor was it a respecter of persons, for his tales would chide the follies alike of raja or ryot, political agent or diwan. His sudden death soon after I left Bastar meant the loss of a dear friend, and of an Indian of a type more fitted to a past age but unlikely to be bettered in any succeeding generation. They say that in the forests around Kondagaon, where he shot so many man-eating tigers and organized so many successful tiger beats, the Murias already revere him as Chaitan Deo, a god of good hunting without whose favour no beat will yield game. Nothing could have appealed more to his sense of humour. Wherever he may be, may he have boon companions to laugh at his rhymes and tales, to drink from his silver glass, to take betel from his silver box, and to handle the hunting-knife and the silver-mounted cane given him by successive Governors, and may he live long in the folk memories of Bastar!

For other help I must thank Mr. K. L. B. Hamilton, C.I.E., I.C.S., Political Agent for the Central Provinces States when I went to Bastar, who has also kindly allowed me to reproduce some of his Bastar photographs; Mr. D. R. Rutnam, I.C.S., my successor as Administrator, who was my host in Bastar twice in 1932 and greatly facilitated my 1934 tour in various ways; Dr. W. P. S. Mitchell, M.B.E., for more than twenty years Chief Medical Officer of the State, the best of companions in Jagdalpur and in camp, and contributor of an interesting account of a Maria fishing beat; Khan Sahib S. R. Daver, Chief Forest Officer, for much information, help in arranging tours, identification of flora and constant interest; Mr. D. J. Plumley, State Engineer, and his most hospitable wife for much help and kindness, especially in my 1934 tour, and for much information gathered in their long experience of Bastar; Mr. Ramesh Chandra Roy, Joint Editor with his distinguished father Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Roy, M.L.C., of *Man in India*, who at his father's request kindly went with me in my 1934 tour and took the anthropometric measurements on which he based the useful Appendix V. I have also had much help from Mr. K. B. L. Shrivastava and Mr. B. P. Dube, my Bastar stenographer and reader respectively; from Mr. Sampat Singh, interpreter in 1932 and again in 1934, and from Mr. Kosre, my Nagpur stenographer, who kindly devoted a month's leave to helping Mr. R. C. Roy and me in March 1934. My mother-in-law, Mrs. Boyes, kindly drew for me the panther trap reproduced on page 157. 000

I owe thanks and apologies to many Maria friends and acquaintances, who have endured my probing curiosity and helped me to secure victims for measurement and photography, especially Kama Peda of Dugeli, for constant help at Bailadila; Kalmu Boda of Pharaspal, *pargana* headman of Barsur, to whose steadiness some of us present in the tiger-beat described in Chapter VIII, Part B, may well owe our lives; and to Usendi Moda of Orcha, whose reprieve by Sir Benjamin Robertson from sentence of death and subsequent virtual headmanship of Chhota Dongar Mar are excellent arguments against capital punishment; I have had few more moving sights than the tears of pleasure on the smiling faces of him and his clansmen when they welcomed me back to Orcha in 1934 after an absence of four years.

I had hoped to offer this book to that charming lady, the Maharani Prafulla Kumari Devi of Bastar. But her untimely death has just deprived the State of one whom to know was to love. *Requiescat!*

W. V. GRIGSON

Polperro
September 19th, 1936

Postscript. I have also to thank the Government of the Central Provinces for a recent honorarium, thanks to which this book is more fully illustrated than it would otherwise have been.

Jubbulpore
March 1st, 1937

W.V.G.

[p. xxii is blank]

010

PART I

INTRODUCTORY. BASTAR STATE AND ITS PEOPLES; THE HISTORICAL, GEOGRAPHIC AND ETHNOGRAPHIC SETTING OF THE MARIAS

[p. 1]

[p. 2 is blank]

CHAPTER I

THE SETTING IN TIME; THE HISTORICAL ISOLATION OF BASTAR

13 BASTAR STATE lies at the extreme south-east corner of the Central Provinces of India, between 17° 46′ and 20° 14′ north, and 80° 15′ and 82° 1′ east. Its area, according to the recently revised Survey of India figures, of 13,725 square miles makes it the tenth state in India in size, larger than Belgium and nearly as large as Holland. It is far larger than any of the old Central Provinces and Orissa States, with which it has recently been brought into the new Eastern [161] States Agency. But it is one of the most sparsely peopled tracts of India, the 1931 population of 524,721 giving a density of only 34 to the square mile. If any part of India is still *terra incognita* to nearly all British officials and travellers, it is the vast tract covered by Bastar and the huge Jeypore zamindari recently transferred from the Vizagapatam Agency of Madras to the new province of Orissa. 181 To the ordinary Indian of neighbouring districts, even to many of the few immigrant Hindu and Mussalman traders, this remains a land of savages, seeking still for human victims to sacrifice to their fetishes, skilled in herbs and simples, and potent practitioners of magic and witchcraft. Their view is little changed from that held 110 years ago by Maratha officials who described the Marias of the Abujhmar mountains to Sir Richard Jenkins, then Resident at the Court of Nagpur, as 'naked savages, living on roots and sprigs, and hunting for strangers to sacrifice'.

175 Bastar has in fact always been an almost unknown backwater of the river of Indian history. The late Chief, Maharani Prafulla Kumari Devi, at her accession in 1924 was the last legitimate survivor of one of the most ancient royal families of southern India, the Kakatiya, which reigned at Warangal from about A.D. 1150 to 1425, first possibly as feudatories of the Chalukya kings and then independently. In Bastar folk-song, Annam Deo, the first to reign in Bastar, is spoken of as 'Chalkibans Raja', which may be a corruption of 'Chalukya-bans' and indicate that the Kakatiya family was a cadet branch of the Chalukya. Pratap Rudra, the greatest and the last independent Kakatiya king of Warangal, lost his life and independence in battle with the Mohammedan invaders of the Deccan under Ahmad Shah Bahmani early in the fifteenth century and, according to Bastar tradition and folk-song, his brother Annam Deo fled across the Godavari into Bastar, which had

been an outlying and loosely-held group of feudal dependencies of Warangal. For inscriptions show that before this, in the eleventh century, a Telugu line of Nagvansi kings ruled at Barsur in Dantewara tahsil and at Kuruspal near the Chitrakot falls of the river Indrawati in Jagdalpur tahsil over central Bastar, then known as Chakrakot ; there are also clear signs of another chiefship comprising the Sukma zamindari and the former zamindaris of Chintalnar and Bhiji, now in the Konta tahsil ; the late zamindar of Sukma always claimed that Chintalnar and Bhiji had been given to cadet branches of his family by his ancestors and that his family, though dependent on Warangal, was established in Bastar at Sukma before Annam Deo left Warangal. There are traditions of a Karna king in northern Bastar and of a Karnatak king at Jagdalpur ; and legend still speaks of rajas of Kuakonda and Katakalian in Dantewara tahsil, of the tailed rajas of Tirathgarh in Jagdalpur tahsil, and of Annam Deo fighting to subdue the chiefs of Paralkot, Bhairamgarh and Barsur. The so-called Koyas of southern Bastar still have traditions of visiting King Pratap Rudra's court at Warangal. Till 200 years ago or less, Bastar retained several zamindaris south of the Godavari and in the present East Godavari Agency of Madras, while lists survive of the numerous petty garhs and taluqs, each loosely administered for the Chief of Bastar by Diwans, or alienated to the various zamindars or sub-chiefs, of whom only Bhopalpatnam, Sukma, Kutru and Kotapalli-Pamer now remain. In Kutru, moreover, there remain three or four sub-zamindars holding under the zamindar. All these facts indicate that before Annam Deo's arrival there was a nominal suzerainty of Warangal over most of Bastar, the real authority resting with local chiefs or in the heads of the old tribal organization that was so marked a feature of the medieval kingdoms of the eastern Central Provinces and some of the Chhota Nagpur and the Orissa States. This organization has been ably outlined by Mr. C. U. Wills, I.C.S., in his monograph on 'The Territorial System of the Rajput Kingdoms of Medieval Chhattisgarh', published at pp. 197-262 of the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, new series, Vol. XV, 1919.

The ruined temples at Barsur, Bhairamgarh, Dantewara, Kuruspal and elsewhere indicate an advanced Hindu civilization in the areas directly administered by the Telugu Nagvansi chiefs of Chakrakot. It was a country worth invading in quite early times ; inscriptions tell of many raids between A.D. 844 and 1150 by Eastern Chalukya, Chola, Western Chalukya and Hoysala princes. There must have been a strong early Telugu infiltration, lasting till the Mohammedan conquest of Warangal and Annam Deo's flight into Bastar, after which the curtain fell upon the country till

1853, when it came into direct political relations with the British on the escheat of the Bhonsla Maratha kingdom, to which it had become nominally tributary. Of that infiltration the strongest remaining signs are the groups of Telanga villages that still survive like islands in the heart of Bison-horn Maria and Koya tracts, chiefly in and around the administrative or religious centres of the old Telugu kingdoms such as Dantewara, Barsur, Bhairamgarh, Bijapur and Jaggergonda. They were cut off from Telingana when the south of the state was abandoned to Maria and Koya tribes as a barrier against the Mohammedan. They have forgotten Telugu, and speak Gondi or Halbi; they observe most of the Maria customs and festivals; in fact there is little to distinguish them from their Maria and Koya neighbours, and they are rightly known as the Jhadi (i.e. jungly) Telanga caste, under which name they are described in the article at pp. 238-42 of Russell and Hiralal's *Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces*, Vol. III.[1] But they still provide the priests and servitors of the tutelary deities of the old dynasties, such as Manikeshwari at Barsur and even Danteshwari and Pedamma at Dantewara, and keep up the old ritual in a degraded form. The Marias of the Abujhmar hills seem to be the most primitive and isolated 'aboriginal' race of the Central Provinces; yet only a few miles of mountain and forest separate their habitat from these old centres of Telugu civilization.

The present Maharaja is the twentieth of his line to reign in Bastar. History has little to relate of his predecessors, as their actions had practically no effect upon the outer world. They tended always at first to move farther northward, probably to put as many miles as possible between them and the Mohammedan conquerors, who indeed in 1610 made an abortive raid into Bastar, to be defeated by heavy rain, the difficulty of communications and dearth of provisions in this heavily forested and thinly-peopled tract rather than by the arms of Raja Pratap Raj Deo (Briggs' *Ferishta*, Vol. III, p. 481). To the north they came into contact with the Rajput kingdoms of Raipur and Ratanpur (Chhattisgarh) and Kanker, from the last of which they conquered eighteen *garhs* or *parganas* around Bare Dongar in the present Kondagaon tahsil; and they extended their territory to Sihawa and the borders of Chhattisgarh. To this expansion was probably due the substitution of Hindi or Halbi influences for Telugu. The *garhs* around Bare Dongar are a stronghold of the Halba tribe, whose *Kutumb-Naik* or headman and chief log-god Kachchua Deo live at Chingnur, near Bare Dongar. The tribe has special privileges in the adjacent Kanker State, where a Halba invests each new chief with the royal

---

[1] Referred to subsequently as 'Russell and Hiralal'.

175 robes and affixes the *tika* or sign of office on his forehead. Probably on the conquest of the Bare Dongar country many of them entered the Bastar Raja's service, and supplied most of his troops or militia. The chief Halba villages of the North, such as Bare Dongar, Chhota Dongar, Kolur, Sonpur, Antagarh, Partabpur and Narainpur, are the headquarters of old *garhs* or modern *parganas*, and are islanded in a surrounding sea of 'Muria' or 'Maria' tribes like the Jhadi Telanga villages of the south; the Halba villagers seem to be the descendants of the old garrisons of *paik* militia. To this day the Halbas admit outsiders into their community, while the modern Hindu immigrants commonly take women of the country. The Halbas are thus a mixture, probably, of foreign and aboriginal blood. Their language is the *lingua franca* of Bastar, and, whether classed as a dialect of Marathi with Grierson or of Eastern Hindi with Sten Konow, is at all events an Aryan dialect, and a principal agent in the modification of aboriginal habits and thought; at [191] the 1931 census it was found that 207 *per mille* of the 262,988 Bastaris speaking Gondi dialects as their mother-tongue also spoke Halbi. Its influence is far greater than that of Telugu, which was spoken only by 36·4 out of every thousand speakers of Gondi. Actually there were only 11,662 with Telugu as mother-tongue, against 171,293 with Halbi and 25,774 with Hindustani, Chhattisgarhi and Rajasthani. Hindi influence from Chhattisgarh and the north is now the main foreign influence at work in Bastar.

The State had few dealings with the outer world from 1450 to 1860. A Maratha army under Nilu Pandit intervened on behalf of Raja Dalpat Deo's younger brother in about 1750 and captured Bastar, the old capital, only to be surprised and cut to pieces by Dalpat Deo, Nilu Pandit escaping with the help of a Banjara who sewed him up in a sack and carried him out of Bastar on his pack bullock. But in 1780 Dalpat Deo's son and successor Daryao Deo had to seek Maratha aid against his brother Ajmir Singh, and bound himself to pay a small annual tribute of Rs. 4,000 to the Bhonsla Raja of Nagpur. The Bastar chiefs, however, retained full local independence and powers of life and death, and there was no direct interference in the routine management of the State by the Nagpur authorities. Such interference as there was was either to settle the frequent quarrels between Raja Bhopal Deo and his brother and Diwan, Lal Dalganjan Singh, or was dictated by the Government of India in furtherance of their policy of suppressing Meriah or ritual human sacrifice. The history of the measures taken to suppress this practice in Orissa, especially among the Khonds of Gumsur and Kalahandi, and in Jeypore zamindari, is well known. From 1837 onwards hearsay reports were collected

175 either by Madras Presidency officials or by the special staff deputed for this purpose to the Orissa hill tracts of the prevalence of this practice in Bastar. In consequence, at the instance of the British Resident at Nagpur Lal Dalganjan Singh was summoned to Nagpur in 1842 and examined, and a guard of Nagpur Raj police was stationed at Dantewara to prevent human sacrifices in the temple of the State goddess Danteshwari. But it was never proved that such sacrifices had ever taken place. Writing in 1862 after a prolonged tour in Bastar and after special enquiries into this matter in both Kalahandi and Bastar States, of which as Deputy Commissioner of Sironcha he was then in political charge, Captain C. Glasfurd stated that the guard had continued to be posted at Dantewara ever since 1842, and that 'even if the abominable rite ever existed, which is doubtful, it has altogether fallen into disuse'. The matter is not really relevant to the subject of this book, save that to these suspicions were due the first visits of British officials to the State, and the ultimate decision to insist on Raja Bhairon Deo accepting officials from British India as his Diwans. I personally doubt whether such sacrifices ever took place; if they did they were semi-State ceremonies connected with the Raja's yearly Dasehra celebrations, the celebrants were Telangas, and the Marias had nothing to do with them.[1] In actual fact, despite many past

---

182 [1] It is so commonly asserted that these sacrifices were prevalent in Bastar at Dantewara that it is of interest to note the evidence. The 1842 action of the Nagpur Raj was based merely on a few hearsay reports collected through the Agency for the Orissa Hill Tracts, to the effect that victims were kidnapped from outside Bastar, that in Bastar often twenty men were sacrificed at a time, the worst case being said to have been the sacrifice in 1826 of twenty-five or twenty-seven men by the Bastar Raja before setting out on a visit to His Highness the Raja of Nagpur, which was still referred to in 1838 as 'the great sacrifice'; the latter report, however, goes on in the usual *omne ignotum pro magnifico* strain that then and now distinguishes outside Hindu statements about the 'wild jungles' of 'Kankeri-Bastar', to suggest that the practice was rife also in Kanker and adjoining tracts north of Bastar, and that 'in some of the wilder jungles bordering on Chhattisgarh the Gonds add cannibalism to this horrid deed and eat the flesh by sacrifice'. Captain J. MacVicar, the Agent in the Orissa Hill Tracts, in 1855 visited Bastar, saw the Raja and the Lal and visited Dantewara to test the truth of various reports. Beyond the grovelling terror which the goddess Danteshwari inspired throughout the parts visited by him, and the assertions of a man in his camp that sacrificers had recently tried to kidnap him, and of a woman that six years before a man had been sacrificed during some disturbances by the Lal Sahib's orders, he left nothing on record to justify his conclusion that it was beyond all doubt that human sacrifices had never ceased to be offered in spite of the orders of the Nagpur Darbar and successive British Residents at Nagpur. Had he found any real evidence, it is scarcely conceivable that action would not have been taken against the Raja and the Lal Sahib. Actually, all that was done was a visit late that year from Lieut. C. Elliot, the Deputy Commissioner of Raipur, who made no further enquiries, but substituted for the old police guard guards of entirely Mussalman police at Jagdalpur and Dantewara, and straitly warned the Raja that he must do his

175 assertions to the contrary, and although it was almost an article of faith with the Political Department of the Central Provinces that Danteshwari was the chief and most dreaded goddess of all the peoples of Bastar and that her high priest the Jia of Dantewara was the one man who could influence the 'wild Maria tribes', yet she is almost unknown to the Marias of the Abujhmar hills save in a village or two on the Dantewara edge of the hills, while even the more sophisticated Bison-horn Marias of the Dantewara tahsil pay only nominal respect to the goddess in villages where a thatched temple has been erected in her name by non-Maria settlers. The Jia may have influence over the Jhari Telanga and Halba residents of Dantewara tahsil; over the Marias he has none. Hindu State

---

782 utmost to suppress the rite and to establish a more just system of administration. In 1859 the same officer, now Captain Elliot, informed the Raja of the intention of the Commissioner of the Nagpur Province to recommend the extension to Bastar of the operations of the Agent for the Orissa Hill Tracts for enquiring into the prevalence of human sacrifice; but the Raja protested again, as always before, that no such thing had ever occurred; and Captain Elliot stated that he had never had any report of any sacrifice, nor had anything ever come to his notice by rumour or otherwise to lead him to believe that such a thing had happened since the province had come under British rule. No action seems to have been taken, and in 1862 Captain Glasfurd, whose personal opinion has been quoted above to the effect that it was doubtful if such sacrifices had ever taken place, reported that no special agency was necessary for this purpose in Bastar beyond the temple guard. Even this police guard was discontinued in 1863, and five years later the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces reported to the Government of India that there had been no practice of human sacrifice in the Central Provinces 'of late years, if indeed within the memory of man'.

There was thus never a single authenticated instance of human sacrifice in Bastar. Nearly all the stories emanated from Jeypore, the Maharaja of which was at bitter enmity with the Chief of Bastar. In fact, the latter frequently protested that the Jeypore Maharaja was the source of these slanders.

In 1885-6 the whole question was revived in consequence of alarming reports emanating from the Madras police in Jeypore of gangs of Bastar kidnappers being abroad in Jeypore looking for victims for sacrifice at Dantewara. Initial enquiries by Sardar Rattan Singh, the Raipur District Superintendent of Police, suggested that the reports were fabrications and that there was not the slightest particle of evidence to implicate the Bastar authorities. While the enquiries were in progress, the Madras authorities were scared by a further report that an excise peon had been kidnapped near the Bastar border, and urged the immediate despatch of police and troops into Bastar. The Jeypore District Superintendent of Police with some Jeypore police, and the Political Agent of the Chhattisgarh States with fifty military police, proceeded at once to Bastar. Masses of statements were taken implying the existence of a regular organisation to kidnap victims and keep them in various hiding-places till wanted for sacrifice; it was suggested that in twelve villages the ryots held their land free of land revenue for the service of kidnapping victims. No proof could be obtained of these allegations, and not one of the alleged hiding-places was traced. Though Raja Bhairon Deo was removed from the State during the enquiry, nothing was found to implicate him. There was not any evidence of Bastar having caused the disappearance of the persons alleged to have been kidnapped from Jeypore. In consequence of officials incline to claim the aboriginals as Hindus and to deprecate census classification of their religion as animistic or tribal. It has always been easy for such persons to identify the Maria's cult of the Earth or *Bhum* in its aryanized form Mati Deo with Mata or Mai, of whom Danteshwari is the Bastar incarnation; and another source of confusion has been the presence in every aboriginal village of a *gudi* (hedge-temple) or other rough shrine of the *Nar Taluri* ('Village Mother'), known to the Hindus as Gãoṇ Devī, and easily identified with Mata Devi or Maoli. Actually the Marias, whether of the Abujhmar hills or Bison-horn, do not even know Dantewara by that name, but by its older and pre-Danteshwari name of Jatawada. 175

---

782 various statements made, Shamsundar, the Jia or hereditary high priest of the Dantewara temple, the representative of a Rajput family that by tradition had come from Warangal with Raja Annam Deo, was committed for trial on a charge of murdering a Parja who was proved to have disappeared from a Bastar village in 1883, and it was alleged that the Jia had confessed that he had sacrificed him. The Commissioner of Chhattisgarh, Mr. Chisholm, tried the case as Sessions Judge. The Jia had all along refused to sign the confession and stated that he had only said what he did to avoid the indignity of handcuffs. The other witnesses alleged that the statements made in the enquiry had been false, and inspired by fear of the Jeypore police, who had grossly ill-treated them. The Judge held that the witnesses had deliberately made false and tutored statements under the influence of threats, and that the prosecution case completely failed. The Jia was therefore acquitted. In his report to the Chief Commissioner, he said that he considered that the Raja had been wrongly accused, that there was no proof that any human sacrifices had been offered in recent years in Bastar, and that there was scarcely anything tangible enough to justify even suspicion. This view was accepted by the Chief Commissioner, though he was still doubtful about the Jia's confession, which had contained new details of the alleged sacrifice not given by other witnesses, since he considered the Jia too intelligent to be thrown off his balance by a threat of being handcuffed. The kidnapping scare, he pointed out, could be paralleled by various examples in other parts of India, and it was natural for popular rumour to attribute the several disappearances to agents kidnapping victims for Danteshwari because of the old tradition of such sacrifices, while there was nothing strange about disappearances in a country swarming like Bastar with tiger; but there was bound to remain some suspicion over the purpose of attempts that were proved to have been made to kidnap various persons.

In Dantewara they will still show you where the police dug in vain near the temples for the skeletons of the alleged victims, but found not a bone to substantiate the stories of the informers. There were no villages held revenue-free, and no cages for the destined victims. So far as the older inhabitants remember the enquiry, they think the Raja was badly treated. There is no one who even now can give any information about human sacrifices in former days; they deny that there ever were any. Certainly the Meriah rite was never celebrated in Bastar.

Old rumours die hard; in 1913 the Madras police interested themselves in the matter once again, when an Inspector reported his personal belief that the sacrifices still took place at the occasional visits of the late Raja Rudra Pratap Deo to Dantewara, and that a sacrifice was likely at his then impending visit, as he had no son to succeed him! This was at a time when the Raja had lost his powers after the 1910 rebellion and had to follow the advice of a resident European Diwan.

175 The earliest recorded attempt of any European to enter Bastar was made by Captain Blunt in 1795, when journeying from Chunarghur in the United Provinces to Yertnagudam in the 'Ellore Circar' of Madras. His report, which has recently been reprinted in a Central Provinces Government publication, 'Early English Travellers in the Nagpur Territories', was referred to as late as 1853 by Sir Erskine Perry, addressing the Bombay branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, as still giving almost all the information then known not only about Bastar, but of many other parts of Gondwana (the modern Central Provinces), the highlands and jungles of which then comprised 'such a large tract of unexplored country that they form quite an oasis in our maps'. Before his attempt he was warned by both Ittul Pandit, the Maratha governor of Chhattisgarh, and by the Raja of Kanker that he would find it difficult if not impossible to march across Bastar from Kanker to Jeypore, the country being wild and mountainous and the Gond inhabitants very savage. The people were said to be naturally quiet; but the Marathas had never succeeded in doing more than persuade Bastar to pay an occasional small tribute. At that time this had been withheld for four or five years, and the Marathas had only just made the Bastar Chief pay Rs. 5,000 after a series of raids on Bastar territory, which they had persuaded the various 'Gond zemeendars' and neighbours of Bastar to make in order to wrest from him as much territory as possible; in the course of these raids many villages along the Kanker-Jagdalpur-Jeypore road had been plundered, and even the Banjara carriers had abandoned that route to Jeypore. In retaliation, raiding parties from Bastar often descended to plunder the plains villages.[1] Captain Blunt therefore turned west and marched through the zamindaris of the present Drug and Chanda districts, but ultimately attempted to pass from the Ahiri zamindari in the far south-east of the Chanda district across the Indrawati river into the Bhopalpatnam zamindari of Bastar, some miles upstream from the confluence of the Indrawati and the Godavari. He was fiercely attacked by the 'Bastar Gonds' both by day and night, and though their bows, arrows and axes were no match for his firearms, he abandoned the attempt to enter

---

[181] [1] Compare the following extract from Firminger's Edition of the Fifth Report on East India Affairs, 1812, Vol. III, page 109 et seq., referring to the people of Bastar, Rampa and Kalahandi :—

'The people in general, although rude and barbarous, may yet be denominated warlike, as they have always distinguished themselves as bold persevering champions of the great law of nature. Being driven to their wild unwholesome fastnesses among the mountains, they frequently descend in harvest time into the lowlands, to dispute the produce of their ancient rightful inheritance with the present possessors, but their incursions are desultory and simply impelled by the pressing want of subsistence.'

Bastar, and learned later from the Maratha *amil* of Deolmari that 175 he had retired only just in time, as word had been passed from zamindar to zamindar in Bastar to combine to plunder his party. Unless there has been since then a wide displacement of population—which is quite possible in view of the chronic mismanagement of the Bhopalpatnam and Kutru zamindaris of Bastar—it is unlikely that his assailants were Abujhmar or Bison-horn Marias or Koyas; they were probably members of the gangs of ruffians at that time maintained by all the petty chieftains of the Godavari valley, or else Gonds of the type known in that part of Bastar to the Telugus as Dorla, probably Bison-horn Marias who, on descending to the Godavari valley, had come into contact with the outside world. This Maratha Amil, in congratulating Blunt on his escape from the mountains and jungles in which several of the Amil's men had been lost, added some remarks about the men of the jungle which rightly gave the wandering Banjara the credit of being the first civilizing influence in Bastar; his remarks, with the necessary modifications, are certainly true of a later period in the Abujhmar hills and the wilder parts of Central Bastar. He represented the Banjaras as 175 having done much to conciliate and partially civilize the 'Gonds', 'for the traffic which they carry on among them, particularly in 439 salt and sugar, had introduced a taste for luxuries, which many of them now could not easily dispense with. This had also induced them to be more industrious in collecting the produce of their jungles, such as lac, iron ore, and other articles for barter, and had necessitated their affording protection to the Brinjaries (*sic*). In the course of this traffic, which had now lasted about twenty-five years, the desire of the Goands (*sic*) for salt and sugar had considerably increased, and tended more to their civilization than any other means: for before they had tasted or acquired a relish for these articles, no man could venture among them; and he assured me that it had a more powerful effect than the whole force of the Mahratta arms in rendering them obedient to their government.'

The first Europeans actually to visit Bastar seem to have been 175 Captain Fenwick in 1850 and Mr. Take in 1855; they made only short trips up a portion of the Kolab-Sabari river that forms for 114 many miles the eastern boundary of Bastar. I have not seen their reports. Captain MacVicar's brief visit early in 1855 and the important visit of Colonel (then Lieut.) C. Elliot, the Deputy Commissioner of Raipur, later that year have been mentioned above in the footnote on human sacrifice. Elliot's report was reprinted in 1861 as 'Selections from the Records of the Government of India in the Foreign Department, No. XXX. Report on the Bustar and Kharonde Dependencies of the Raepore District'. He

175
114

entered Bastar from Sihawa in the south of the Raipur district, near the trijunction of Raipur, Kanker and Bastar, marched south-east to Jagdalpur and thence to Dantewara, leaving all the zamindari country south of Dantewara and the Abujhmar hills and the present Antagarh tahsil untouched. His report gives some details of the races in the State, much of which, however, repeats obvious *omne ignotum pro magnifico* tales of local Hindus; but he saw nothing of the Abujhmar hills, and, though he visited Dantewara, little of the Bison-horn Marias of that tahsil. He was, on the whole, more interested in the economic and administrative problems of Bastar than in its people. There was also a visit at about this time by Captain Stewart, Explorer of Forests, while in 1855 and 1856 respectively Lieut. Goddard and Lieut. (afterwards Major-General) F. T. Haig explored the Godavari valley in the investigation of Sir A. Cotton's ambitious but largely abortive scheme for making the Godavari and its affluent the Wardha river navigable from Wardha to the sea. Haig's Report on the Navigability of the River Godavari was published at Madras in 1856; I have found also at p. 357 of the *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. V, 1876, an allusion to a report of a visit by him, when a Colonel, to Jagdalpur; but I have been unable to obtain copies of either report, though both are said to contain ethnographic notes.

The most valuable and thorough of the early reports, especially from the ethnographic point of view, is that of Captain C. L. R. Glasfurd, Deputy Commissioner of the former Sironcha District and Political Agent for Bastar, published in 1863 in No. XXXIX of *Selections from the Records of the Government of India in the Foreign Department*. He spent much of the touring seasons of 1861 and 1862 in Bastar, and was probably the first European to visit the then numerous zamindaris of the south, certainly the first to explore any part of the Abujhmar hills. His report is the entire source of the article on Bastar in Grant's 1870 *Central Provinces Gazetteer*, and many of his statements are repeated, unfortunately not always in their true context, in the article 'Gond' in Russell and Hiralal, Vol. III. In February 1930 I found his name still remembered as Gilaspat Sahib in two Abujhmar villages which did not appear to have been visited in the interval by any other European. An example of his accuracy is that he noted the distinction between the Marias of the Abujhmar, whom he termed Marees, and the Marias of Jagdalpur, Dantewara and Bijapur tahsils, whom he termed Marias, but who are known to some of the Abujhmar Marias as Dandami Marias and are generally referred to in this book as Bison-horn Marias. His visit laid the lines of the future policy of the Central Provinces Administration in Bastar State, and it is worth while to reproduce some of his concluding remarks in paragraph 175 of the report :— 175

114

> 'In most English Maps "unexplored territory" is inscribed on the very centre of the Dependency; while the best Indian Map by Colonel Scott, Quarter-Master General of the Madras Presidency, gives but few details, and those few incorrect. The country, it will be perceived, is an interminable forest, with the exception of a small cultivated tract around Jugdalpore, intersected by high mountain ranges, which present serious obstacles to traffic. Its insalubrity is proverbial; the inhabitants are composed of rude, uncivilized tribes of Gonds; in some parts almost savages, who shun contact with strangers, have but few wants which they cannot supply themselves; honest and interesting to the Ethnologist perhaps, but a race who prefer the solitude of forests to the bustle of towns, and the freedom of the savage to all the allurements and comforts of civilization. With such a country and such inhabitants, rapid progress and improvement cannot be looked for; and any efforts to open out the Dependency, with the hope of immediately stimulating trade, or rather creating it where it never existed, would end in disappointment. Our efforts for the present should be to open up a few important lines on which traffic already exists, and to ameliorate the condition of the people by the introduction of a better system of criminal and judicial procedure than that at present in force at Jugdalpore, and, above all, by opening up the Sironcha District, which intervenes between Bustar and the Godavery. The opening up of this river will do more to improve the condition of the Bustar Dependency than the most elaborate system of roads would without it. A demand would be created, which would send traders into parts they never ventured before, and the inhabitants would receive cloth, salt, tobacco and other articles in exchange for their rice, lakh, wax, etc., in the interior. The fact is that the Dependency must be civilised, and the improvement to be material and lasting must have the navigable Godavery and the districts on its banks as its base line; the former once open, and the latter profiting by the facilities of communication with the coast, the bars to civilization in Bustar will soon be broken down, and that from the direction of the Godavery. In the meantime, however, the road carried on by the Madras Government as far as Jeypore should be opened out to Jugdalpore, and eventually thence to Sironcha; and the great Brinjara route from the southern portions of the Raepore District, which passes through a part of Bustar, should also be cleared. These, with vaccination and the introduction of copper coin, might be at once commenced, and subsequently other steps as they suggest themselves. The Police now distributed over the Dependency will also be of great use in gradually accustoming the people to us, and the location of a news-writer at Jugdalpore would be attended with equally good results.'

As the Maratha Amil sixty-seven years before, so now the Victorian Englishman; develop trade, and civilization would follow. The isolation of centuries was to end, Bastar to be opened to the world by land and by water, and its 'savages' to exchange their freedom for 'the allurements and comforts of civilization', trade and traders, clothes, tobacco, a better system of criminal and judicial procedure, vaccination and copper coin. Did, and do, the ghosts of the old builders of the ruins of Barsur, Bhairamgarh and Kuruspal smile to hear a newer race decree that 'Bastar must be civilized!'? 000

A land free from rules and regulations and a race that had no use for copper coin did not square with that passion for uniformity

000 that characterized the Victorian rulers of India and still marks the framers of constitutions for the India of to-day. It could not be seen that there must have been some institutions or system in this apparently unordered Bastar to have kept her together and free from Mohammedan or Maratha interference for all those centuries. 175 648 So from Glasfurd onwards Political Agents, Commissioners and Chief Commissioners sought to modernize the economics and the administration of this lovely and still lonely land. An alien police from 'civilized' India was soon followed along the gradually expanding lines of communication by Bania and Rohilla tradesmen, and by low-paid esurient subordinate officials 'lent' to the State, who regarded service in a native state only as a means to the rapid acquisition of wealth. Cultivation was to be expanded by the formation of new villages by alien immigrants; instead, the aliens were given long established Bhattra, Muria, Parja or Maria villages, nominally as lessees, over the heads of the traditional village headmen; and the lessees at once proceeded as fast as possible to get the best land into their own hands, to make the headmen's lives a burden by their repeated demands for forced labour and supplies, to ignore the use and wont of village life, especially the *sari-bori* or co-operation in supplies and labour for village bread-winning and village festivals, to introduce Hindu and Mussalman settlers, and to turn the natives of Bastar into bondservants little better than slaves by advancing them money, on terms which made repayment practically impossible, in return for their labour or that of their sons. Every immigrant trader even considered it his right to demand the labour of half a dozen 'Murias' to carry his wares for him. Consequent risings in 1876 and trouble in succeeding years led to the virtual supersession of the old Raja Bhairam Deo in 1886, and the State passed under full management on his death in 1891. From 1886 to 1891 and for the first few years of the long (1891-1908) minority of Raja Rudra Pratap Deo, a series of subordinate officials was lent as Diwans to the State, and a further evil arose in the growing array of minor State officials, few of whom were natives and none aboriginals of Bastar, abusing the ancient custom of *bisaha*, or the payment by villagers of a twentieth of their crops for the feeding of the Raja's servants, by interpreting it as a right to commandeer any aboriginal's produce at an arbitrarily fixed and often nominal price, and generally forgetting to pay even that. The newly-cleared roads soon seemed to run through wildernesses, for on villagers of roadside villages the burden of *begar*, or forced labour, and *bisaha* fell with especial severity. Being 184 miles from Raipur, the headquarters of the Commissioner and the Political Agent, Bastar was seldom visited, and the people were far too much

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

at the mercy of the incompetency or knavery of the local officials. The latter meanwhile were carrying on the prescribed policy of opening communications, introducing the criminal police and judicial system of British India, and exploiting the forests (again by forced labour). Though with the growth of trade there was much to be said for applying the Penal, Criminal Procedure and Civil Procedure Codes and the Evidence Act of British India to the open parts of the Jagdalpur tahsil and northern Bastar, they were far too advanced for most of the tribes, and remain so to this day. No notice was taken of the old system of caste or tribal or *pargana* panchayats presided over by the caste or *pargana* headman appointed by the Chief or the zamindar, which had for centuries administered rough and ready justice far more to the liking of the people than the troubles of a long investigation by a corrupt police, followed by a cumbersome magisterial enquiry and perhaps then the protracted agony of a sessions trial, to their minds unnecessary and unintelligible, with the farcical addition of assessors, chosen, so as to fulfil the requirements of a procedure code designed for a British India at least 1,000 years further advanced in civilization, from a few obsequious immigrants with no knowledge of aboriginal life or psychology. A similar attempt was made to improve on the old excise arrangements by which the local Kalar or Sundi was a village or *pargana* servant kept to distil liquor when needed for social or religious festivities, and remunerated in grain by the villagers every harvest; a system of auctioning outstills was introduced, the letter but not the spirit of arrangements in British India being copied, and the result was a number of contractors and sub-contractors all distilling and hawking liquor, and drunkenness on a scale previously unknown in Bastar and with few parallels in India. Of course trade was increasing, and more land was being cleared, *pari passu* with these growing abuses; but the moral effect of the changes was not good, and there can be few more striking examples of policy sound in motives but utterly wrong because of the divorce of administration from anthropology.

175
648

Sir Andrew Fraser, then Commissioner, in an able inspection note written after a long tour of the State in 1892, spotted much of the evil, particularly the State officials' utter ignorance of all but the villages adjacent to Jagdalpur and their headquarters, and their complete lack of touch with the people. He of course strongly advocated the policy of opening up the State, but saw that a just and active administration was necessary if the policy was to succeed. This was ultimately secured by the appointment in 1896 of Colonel (later Major-General) Fagan as Administrator. During his three years of rough and ready justice he toured the length and breadth

175 of the State, and he and his wife are still remembered with affection.
648 The aboriginal, if he had to work on the new roads, yet saw that everyone else had to; but he no longer had to work for the alien trader and village-lessee, and he could get redress for oppression. Under Colonel Fagan and his successor, Mr. G. W. Gayer of the Indian Police, though roads were built and regular land revenue settlements effected on simplified Central Provinces lines, efficient administration kept the tribes satisfied; and for the first time medical relief and vaccination were organized in the State by Surgeon-Major Mitchell. But Mr. Gayer was succeeded by an Indian Superintendent, who held charge for the last few years of the minority and then continued till 1910 as Raja Rudra Pratap Deo's Diwan. He had served successfully as Diwan of Kalahandi State, and his intentions were admirable. Unfortunately he was unable to control his subordinates or to see that his excellent orders were enforced. The old abuses crept back into the swept and garnished State. He was responsible also for two unpopular innovations. The first was a policy of planting new primary schools all over the State, the masters being assisted by attendance peons who bullied the ryots into sending their children to school, while masters and peons levied forced labour and supplies freely. The second was the reservation of large areas as State forests, a measure very necessary as a check to the wholesale destruction of valuable timber by the aboriginals practising shifting cultivation, but bound by its very nature and its interference with long-cherished rights to arouse suspicion. It called, therefore, for great tact, and the people should have been carefully prepared for the measure, and protected from any avoidable hardship in its execution. Instead, it was carried out abruptly. Every village in the reserved areas was destroyed, though provision ought to have been made for forest villages as a source of forest labour, and if this had been done few of the villages need have been disturbed; the old village lands still often remain treeless in the forests, and in recent years it has been necessary to try and tempt settlers back to found much-needed forest villages. Oppression by State officials and by immigrant settlers, excessive levy of forced labour and supplies, unpopular new measures, and the apparent blindness of the Raja and his Diwan to popular grievances produced keen discontent, which was worked up by Lal Kalendra Singh, the first cousin and former Diwan of Raja Bhairam Deo, in the hope of securing the succession for himself. The Murias, Bhattras, and Parjas of Jagdalpur tahsil and some of the Bison-horn Marias and others in Dantewara tahsil and farther south broke into rebellion, in which the Murias of Antagarh and Kondagaon tahsils joined, only the zamindaris and

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

the Marias of the Abujhmar hills abstaining. The tribes converged 175
on Jagdalpur, the Diwan who had been touring in the South fleeing
into the Chanda district. A half battalion of regular Panjabi troops 648
and large detachments of armed Central Provinces police soon suppressed and disarmed the rebels. A few ringleaders who had been guilty of cruel murders of isolated State officials were hanged, and several hundred men flogged, a punishment really more humane for such primitive men than imprisonment. Lal Kalendra Singh and a few of his associates were banished. The Raja was deprived of his powers, and an experienced Englishman, Mr. James May, appointed Diwan. The rebellion had been marked by keen hostility towards the immigrant exploiters, and a movement to keep Bastar for Bastaris. *Pari passu* with the punishment of the rebels, full enquiry was made into their undoubted grievances, and stern action taken against their oppressors. From 1910 till the Raja's death in 1921 the State was under virtual Government management; it has since then been under direct management, owing to the minority and the subsequent illness of the late Maharani.[1]

Save, therefore, for the short period 1908-10 the State has virtually been under Government management since 1886. Great progress has been made in developing communications. The Godavari navigation scheme referred to in the quotation above from Glasfurd's report was abandoned in 1871 after the works on the first barrier at Dummagudem in the present East Godavari district of Madras had been completed and much money had been spent on the works at the second barrier, where the river forms the boundary between Bastar and Hyderabad. This must be one of the very few great engineering works abandoned uncompleted by the British in India, defeated by the fever and sweltering heat of the valley, the difficulty of recruiting labour, lack of funds and the improbability of an adequate return for the great cost; and there are few more desolate sights than the vast ruins of the half-finished anicut, lock-gates and guard-walls that still resist the annual floods of this mighty river, and in the dry weather stand gaunt and futile in the baking wilderness of rocks and sands in which the united Godavari
and Indrawati there lose themselves. With the transference of 175
the Political Agency for Bastar from Sironcha to Raipur, all idea of
the Godavari as the base-line for its communications was abandoned. 491
Emphasis was placed on linking the north of the State with the main Nagpur-Calcutta railway line by roads from Raipur and Rajnandgaon to Jagdalpur, and the Vizagapatam Agency road from Salur

---

[1] The hereditary title of the Ruling Chief of Bastar was raised from Raja to Maharaja in 1932.

175 rail-head below the Eastern Ghat mountains to Jeypore and the
Bastar border was continued thence to Jagdalpur ; subsequently
491 roads have gradually been driven westward to Dantewara, Bijapur,
Kutru and Bhopalpatnam, and southward to Sukma and Konta ;
the most recent development has been many miles of forest roads,
constructed either as feeder roads to the Raipur and Rajnandgaon
roads, or to link up the forests of Dantewara and the south with the
Godavari at Tarlagudam, Cherla and Dummagudam or the Kolab-
Sabari at Mismagudam and Konta. The Raipur road is now
motorable throughout the year, and there is a daily mail and
passenger service by it to Kanker and Dhamtari. A railway
connexion with the new Raipur-Vizianagram line has been
surveyed, and would have been under construction but for
the world-wide financial depression. The revenue of the State
[651] has risen from about Rs. 30,000 in 1855, then received in kind
or in cowry shells at a rate of 2,880 to the rupee, to well over a
million rupees.

So the old order is doomed ; and with the motor-bus abroad in
177 the land and scores of aboriginals every month seeking work on the
public works of the State, in the Assam tea gardens or in the towns
of the Godavari valley, with the railway administration feeling this
last great blank of 300 miles from Raipur to Salur by 250 from
Titlagarh in Kalahandi State to Singareni in Hyderabad a slur to
be removed as soon as funds permit, change comes ever faster.
My successors and I, like our predecessors, are guilty of accelerating
change ; but we can on the one hand plead that when we came
a return to the old isolation was not practical politics, and on the
other that we have tried before it was too late to strengthen and
revive the old tribal *panchayat* organization and restore its
jurisdiction in civil and in all but serious criminal offences, to check the
drunkenness made rampant by a bad excise system, to prevent the
further bestowal of aboriginal villages on alien *thekadars* (lessees)
and to make the post of village headman one of honour and
responsibility instead of one to be held reluctantly by some dummy with
no influence in the village, to abolish *bisaha*, to deprive village
lessees of the right of taking forced labour, to minimize the right of
officials to take it and to regulate the still necessary State demands
for road and other labour so as to inconvenience the cultivator as
little as possible, to see that it is paid for, and to abolish bondservice.
Much of great interest could be written on the effects and reactions
of the administrative measures of the last fifty years sketched in
121 these last few pages. But the purpose of this book is to place on
record while there is yet time an account of the way of life prevalent
among the Maria tribes of Bastar, perhaps now the most primitive

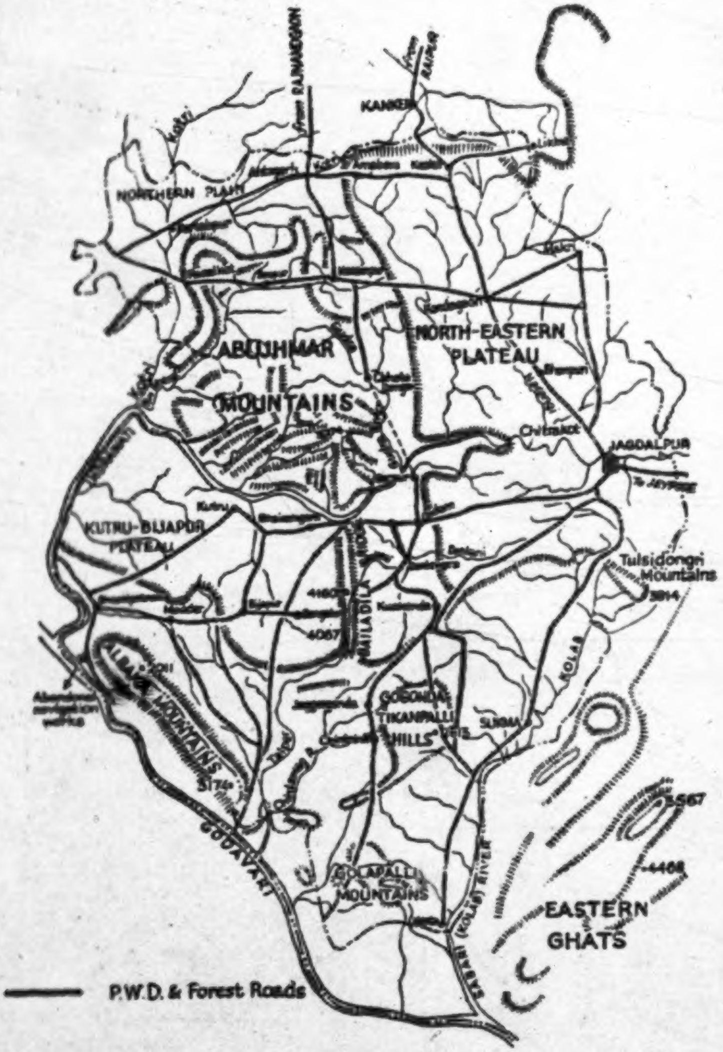
tribes between the Godavari and the Ganges. Little has been written about them, or indeed about the great Gond race as a whole. My experience has been in going from the backwoods of Bastar to a modern Indian district like Nagpur that even there there is a great substratum of primitive thought, religion and practice which has been illuminated for me by what I learnt in Bastar. 121

1; Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

PLATE I

131
133
491


From RAJNANDGAON
From RAIPUR
KANKER
NORTHERN PLAIN
ABUJHMAR
MOUNTAINS
NORTH-EASTERN
PLATEAU
Chitrakot
JAGDALPUR
To JEYPORE
KUTRU-BIJAPUR
PLATEAU
Kutru
BAILADILA
4160
4067
Tulsidongri
Mountains
3914
KOLAB
ALBAKA
MOUNTAINS
5174
GODAVARI
GOLAPALLI
MOUNTAINS
GOGONDA
TIKANPALLI
HILLS
SUKMA
SABARI (KOLAB) RIVER
5567
4468
EASTERN
GHATS
P.W.D. & Forest Roads

BASTAR STATE—NATURAL DIVISIONS
Scale (approx.): 1 inch = 32 miles

CHAPTER II

THE SETTING IN SPACE; THE PHYSICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE GEOGRAPHY OF BASTAR

000 BEFORE dealing with the Maria Gonds, I propose to describe in this and the following chapter the main features of the physical and administrative geography and the ethnography of Bastar. The political divisions frequently are founded on the old tribal organization of the country, to which I have alluded in the first chapter; and in discussing the distribution of the tribes it is impossible to avoid constantly referring to them.

133 The great river Indrawati, which flows across the centre of the State from east to west with a winding course within the State of about 240 miles, almost bisects the State, and is its main geographical feature. It rises near Rampur Thuamul in Kalahandi, one of the former Orissa States, whence it flows south-west some thirty miles till, after forming the boundary between Kalahandi and the Orissa Province for eight or nine miles, it crosses the south-east corner of the Naurangpur taluq of the latter, and then for a winding course of some sixty miles divides the Naurangpur from the Jeypore taluq of Jeypore zamindari, till it enters the Jagdalpur tahsil of Bastar near the confluence of the Bhaskel tributary, thirteen miles above Jagdalpur. At Chitrakot, twenty-four miles by road and thirty-five by river below Jagdalpur, the Indrawati plunges off the edge of the great 2,000 feet plateau of north-east Bastar and northern Jeypore in a beautiful horseshoe fall ninety-four feet high, followed by a series of wild rapids down a valley rapidly descending between high cliff ramparts. In its course across Jeypore zamindari and Jagdalpur tahsil it is a deep sluggish river winding along in great S-bends through field and evergreen sal forest, and always more or less rusty [134] in colour from flowing over deep beds of red laterite or *murram*. It receives no large tributaries from the south above Chitrakot, as here it flows close to the watershed dividing it from the Kolab-Sabari, the great tributary of the Godavari that rises in the Eastern Ghats above Jeypore and for many miles forms the eastern boundary of Bastar; at one point a tributary of the Kolab is less than a mile from the main current of the Indrawati. But just above Chitrakot falls it is joined by the Narangi, and about ten miles below the falls by the Baordig, which drain most of north-east Bastar (the Kondagaon tahsil).

133 For the rest of its course from Chitrakot to its junction with the Godavari near Bhadrakali in Bhopalpatnam zamindari on the western border it is typical of any great river draining mountainous country. It loses its rusty colour at Chitrakot, and becomes a series of rapids and deep pools, giving way to fresh rapids wherever it passes over sheets of rock or pierces through successive mountain barriers in wild gorges. The pools are often great land-locked lakes, with deeply wooded islands, the haunts of tiger, sambar and wild buffalo. It receives various tributaries, of which the chief Bastar rivers are the Gudra, the Nei Bherat[1] and the Kotri on the north bank, and on the south bank the Dantewara, the Berudi and the Bhopalpatnam Chintawag. The Gudra and the Nei Bherat take most of the drainage of the wild tangle of the Abujhmar hills, save for smaller mountain torrents, such as the Goinder that descends from Hikul over the magnificent Handawada falls (not marked on the maps), and the Komra that for much of its length forms the Bastar-Central Provinces (Chanda) boundary. The Gudra drains the Tulagotal, Farsigotal, Farsal, Bardal and Chudala (Chhota) Dongar *parganas* of the Abujhmar mountains and other adjacent *parganas* of the Antagarh tahsil; the gorge near Chhota Dongar where it leaves the Abujhmar mountains in a narrow loch between forested peaks, its banks deep in bamboo, *Osmunda regalis* and other ferns, is beautiful. The Nei Bherat rises near Narainpur in the Kurangal *pargana* of Antagarh, the north-western tahsil, and flows due west past Sonpur and through the Nurbhum Maria *pargana*; then turning south-west through the Tapalibhum (Chhotemar) and Behramar (Baremar) Maria *parganas* of Antagarh, it crosses the south-east corner of the Ahiri zamindari in Chanda district to join the Indrawati and the Kotri or Paralkot river in a trijunction of unforgettable beauty 'beneath the fortified rock of Bhamragarh, in a wild expanse of hill and forest unbroken by a single clearing'.[2] Besides the Maria *parganas* of Antagarh already mentioned, it drains the Hukkagotal and Jatawada and parts of the Bardal and Farsal Maria *parganas* of Antagarh, and the portion of the Abujhmar mountains that extends beyond Bastar

---

[103] [1] Wrongly marked 'Nibra' on the old Topographical Survey maps of the sixties, slightly revised modern editions of which are still the only maps available of most of Bastar. 'Nei Bherat' means in the Maria dialect 'Dog River', so called after the numbers of otters in the river.

The names on these old maps are often wrong, and represent the efforts of Telugu or Bengali surveyors to reproduce the difficult guttural and other sounds of Maria. The maps are full of other inaccuracies, and seem often to have been drawn from the imagination of surveyors afraid of fever, tigers and aboriginal magic.

[2] Lucie-Smith's 1869 Chanda Settlement Report, para. 56. He calls the Nibra River by the name 'Pamla Ghootum'.

PLATE II

THE CHITRAKOT FALLS OF THE RIVER INDRAWATI

CONFLUENCE OF RIVERS INDRAWATI AND KOMRA, BORDER OF BASTAR AND CHANDA

THE ARANPUR PASS

[facing p.22]

into the south-east corner of Chanda district and is inhabited by the same hill Marias as the Bastar *parganas* in these mountains. The Kotri is far the largest of the tributaries of the Indrawati. Its main stream rises far north, in the Pannabaras zamindari of Drug district; it is joined at Gudumpara in Kanker State by the Kandra which drains the Sambalpur tahsil of Kanker; below Partabpur in the north-west corner of Bastar by a large branch also called the Kotri which rises from two main sources in the Matlaghat and Raoghat mountains and drains all the north of Antagarh tahsil, including the Maria *parganas* of Padalbhum (Pataldesh), Tapalibhum and Behramar; and by another large stream a little west of Paralkot. It then crosses south-east Chanda to the west of the Nei Bherat, to meet the latter and the Indrawati at Bhamragarh.

As these northern tributaries between them drain the country of the Abujhmar Maria, so the southern tributaries drain the northern lands of the Bison-horn or Dandami Maria, the Indrawati and its small tributary near Barsur, the Mander, being roughly the boundary between them. The chief southern tributary is the Dantewara, made up of the Sankani and the Dankani, which unite just by the famous Dantewara temple. The Sankani rises near the lofty (4,067 feet) Nandiraj peak of the Bailadila mountains, and drains the Aranpur, Bacheli and Dugeli *parganas* of Dantewara tahsil, while the Dankani rises from the Tangri Dongri ghats on the south edge of the great north-eastern plateau, from sources near Killepal and Paknar, and drains the Katakalian and Kuakonda tracts of Dantewara tahsil. The other southern tributaries of the Indrawati do not call for remark here; except the Dantewara, the Berudi and the Bhopalpatnam Chintawag, they are as small as the southern tributaries above the Chitrakot falls, the Indrawati being close to the watersheds that separate it from the Kolab-Sabari and the main Godavari except in the areas drained by the three tributaries named above.

Apart from a few streams in the north-east of Bastar which flow off the northern slopes of the Telinghat hills near Keskal into the Mahanadi system, and in the south-west the Talper-Chintawag system draining the western slopes of the Bailadila mountains and the Bijapur tahsil directly into the Godavari, the only other important river-system is that of the Kolab-Sabari (the river is known in Jeypore and in most of Bastar as the Kolab, and as the Sabari or Savari in the Konta tahsil of Bastar and the adjacent taluqs of the Jeypore and East Godavari Agencies). Rising on the 3,000 feet Korapat plateau of the Eastern Ghats between Jeypore and Korapat, it cascades down on to the Jeypore-Bastar plateau, flows north a few miles to its junction with the Jaura near the Bastar

133 Irredenta town of Kotapad, and then south to Korokpur. Thence for eighteen miles it divides the Kanker State Forest of Bastar from the Jeypore taluq, but from the confluence of the Kanker river it turns south away from the Bastar border into the Malkangiri taluq of Jeypore and then west past the Bastar Irredenta *pargana* of Salmigarh for about twenty-six miles; it flows west then for another five miles, as the Bastar border, as far as the confluence of the Kumakoleng and Thakawada rivers. For the next thirty-five miles, as far as Sukma, it enters the Sukma zamindari of Bastar, and from Sukma southwards for ten miles it is the Sukma-Malkangiri boundary, and thence still on the whole southwards for forty-four miles as far as Konta it divides the Konta tahsil of Bastar from Malkangiri. Just below Konta, after its junction with the Sileru, it enters the Bhadrachalam taluq of the East Godavari Agency of Madras, and after another twenty miles of southward course flows into the Godavari at Kunavaram. Konta is a river port accessible to small steamers from the rainy season till January. The trade of south-east Bastar therefore passes through it, and it is a focus of Telugu influence. The Kolab-Sabari is altogether about 202 miles in length, for seventy-seven of which it forms the Bastar boundary, and for thirty-five of which it flows inside the State, while in another thirty or thirty-five miles of its course it receives the drainage of parts of Bastar. Where it falls from the 2,000 foot plateau to Salmigarh beneath the heights of Tulsidongri (3,915 feet) it resembles the Indrawati in its wild beauty; the two rivers, indeed, are much alike in their scenery and the levels through which they pass. On its right bank it receives all the drainage of the Parja country in the south-east of Jagdalpur tahsil and the north of Sukma zamindari; that of the Bison-horn Maria country of the adjacent parts of Jagdalpur, a small portion of Dantewara, and western Sukma; and all that of the 'Koya' and Bison-horn Maria country in Konta tahsil east of the Gogonda-Tikanpalli hills (2,000 to 2,600 feet) and the Golapalli hills (1,200 to 2,800 feet).

With the river-systems thus outlined, it is easy to demonstrate the main physical and administrative divisions of the country. First there is the great north-eastern plateau, stretching from the Telinghat hills about 2,500 feet high and a few miles south of the northern border to the Tangri Dongri and Tulsidongri ranges that divide Jagdalpur tahsil from Sukma zamindari and Dantewara tahsil. The plateau extends eastward into Jeypore and Kalahandi, while on the west the Matlaghat hills and the hills that run roughly south from Benur on the Kondagaon-Antagarh-Rajnandgaon road to Kankot on the Indrawati below the Chitrakot Falls divide the

plateau from Antagarh tahsil. The northern half of this north- 133
eastern plateau is Kondagaon tahsil, and the southern Jagdalpur.
The height of the plateau varies from 2,500 or 2,400 feet at its
northern and southern edges to about 1,800 feet near Jagdalpur.
It is a region of evergreen forests, with the beautiful sal (*Shorea* [137]
robusta) as its characteristic tree. The temperature seldom exceeds
104° in the summer, and at Jagdalpur descends to 40° in the winter, [132]
while hoar frosts are not uncommon in the forests. Kondagaon
tahsil is under-developed and jungly, much of it and Antagarh 311
having been comparatively recently settled by Gond immigrants 137
from Chhattisgarh. Jagdalpur, on the other hand, has miles of
excellent rice cultivation in its extensive open plains, and is the
only heavily populated part of the State, except adjacent parts of
Dantewara. On its south-eastern and southern edges, however,
it has hilly country heavily forested or inhabited by primitive Parjas
and Bison-horn Marias.

The north-west corner of the State is the Antagarh tahsil. 133
The north of this is a continuation of the Chhattisgarh-Kanker
plain 800 or 900 feet above sea-level, bounded on the west and north
by the Chanda and Drug districts of the Central Provinces and by
Kanker State. This plain, the second main natural division of
Bastar, is reached from Keskal and north Kondagaon through the
Amabera *pargana*, which, though on the 2,000 feet plateau, is in
Antagarh, by a forest road descending the steep Matlaghat by a
recently re-aligned and easily-graded descent. The main road
from Jagdalpur and Kondagaon through Antagarh to Rajnandgaon
rail-head enters the tahsil in the Benur *pargana* on the 2,000 feet
plateau and descends 200 or 300 feet to Narainpur which, with the
adjacent *parganas* of Kurangal, Dugal, Baragaon, Ghat Jhorian
and Bare Jhorian, as well as Benur and the lowland or 'Kalpatti'
villages of Chhote Dongar *pargana*, are an intermediate stage
between the true 2,000 feet plateau and the plain of north Antagarh.
The inhabitants are mostly what were called by Glasfurd and other
early writers Jhorias, in appearance scarcely distinguishable from
the Marias of the Abujhmar hills, with similar dancing dress, and
customs similar, but considerably modified by sojourn in the
lowlands and contact with other tribes. From Narainpur a forest [491]
road runs westward along the Nei Bherat valley to Sonpur, with
an extension thence to Paralkot and Maroda, where it meets
another forest road that comes westward from Taroki on the
Narainpur-Antagarh road across the north Antagarh plain. The
Sonpur, Paralkot and Paralkot-Kalpatti *parganas* are really lowland
parganas in the middle of highland Maria *parganas*, and the two
latter belong properly speaking to the north Antagarh plain. The

Sonpur *pargana*, however, has many Hill Maria villages, and a sprinkling of Halbas and 'Jhorias'.

[491] The road from Narainpur to Antagarh descends the Raoghat near Aturbera village between a spur of the Abujhmar mass of hills 2,938 feet in height and the Matlaghat hills, down the sal-clad valley of a stream that drains into the Kotri river. The Antagarh plain has the 'Muria' *parganas* of Antagarh, Kolar, Surebahi, Bomra, Kirangal, Kalpatti, and Bandadesh, besides Paralkot and Paralkot-Kalpatti already mentioned.

The third great natural division of the State is the Abujhmar mountain mass. Roughly speaking, this is composed of all the wild hill country bounded on the south by the Indrawati, on the north by the Antagarh plain, on the east by the Jhoria country described above and the Gudra valley from Chhota Dongar to Mangnar near the Indrawati and Barsur, and on the west by the Kotri river from Partabpur to its junction with the Indrawati at Bhamragarh in the Ahiri zamindari of the Chanda district. This tangle of hills is roughly rectangular, but at its north-eastern corner throws two great spurs into the Antagarh plain by Raoghat (already mentioned) and Kolar, and at its north-western corner projects a bastion of hill almost to the Kotri valley between Partabpur and Koilibera. The north-eastern spurs are now in the Matla State Forest, but the north-western bastion has as its northern face the Padalibhum *pargana*, with the Tapalibhum and Nurbhum *parganas* to the side and south of this, all three occupied by Hill Marias. The hill mass is so cracked and seamed with valleys running in all directions, that it is not possible to point out any main hill systems; the only clues that help to a conception of its features are the watersheds. The northern slopes drain into the Bastar branch of the Kotri, and the north-western into the main Kotri after the junction of the Drug-Kanker and Bastar branches. Below this, the great trough of the Nei Bherat valley cleaves the mountains from Narainpur on the north-eastern edge westward for thirty-five miles through Sonpur into the Nurbhum *pargana*, where it turns south-west through the Behramar *pargana* and the Chanda Hill Maria country to Bhamragarh. The watershed dividing this from the streams that flow into the Gudra runs roughly south-west from the north-western corner of the Hukkagotal *pargana* just south of the Nei Bherat valley along a line of crests to Kutul village in Bardal *pargana*, thence south to Dhurbera, the village of the headman of the Farsal *pargana*, and slightly east of south from there to Adeq in Chhota Dongar Mar *pargana*. From the hills between Dhurbera and Adeq some smaller streams flow south-west direct into the Indrawati. From the crests running first eastwards from Adeq and then south-eastwards towards the Maria villages of Mangnar *pargana*, streams flow southwards or south-westwards into the Indrawati.

Though this block of hills is a homogeneous tract, peopled entirely by Hill Marias, it unfortunately is split up administratively. The south-western corner above Bhamragarh and Lahir is British territory, part of the Ahiri zamindari of Chanda district. All the *parganas* north of the watershed between the Nei Bherat and Indrawati on the one hand and the Gudra on the other are in Antagarh tahsil. The slopes draining into the Indrawati from the Chanda border eastwards to a line running north from the confluence of the Indrawati and the Dantewara form the Kutru Mar and the Bhairamgarh Mar *parganas* of Kutru zamindari; the Hikul-Toinar-Handawada group of eight hill villages east of this is part of Dantewara tahsil, and the few hill villages at the south-east corner are part of the outlying Mangnar *pargana* of the Bhopalpatnam zamindari.

The peaks of the Abujhmar vary in height from 2,050 feet on the northern fringes to 3,322, the highest point near Tadanar in Mangnar *pargana*. Fourteen peaks exceed 3,000 feet in height. Except the Marias themselves, few persons in Bastar know the tract at all; and before I visited it, all the old tales served up to Glasfurd in the sixties were again cooked up for my benefit; the country was so rugged that I should have to climb on my hands and knees; it was impossible for elephants and quite out of the question for horses; I should be unable to get bearers for my camp kit; fever was rampant; distances were enormous; and so on. Some of the marches are difficult; but then a car can be taken now up to Orcha, the chief village of Chhota Dongar Mar; the people are friendly in the extreme, and if properly treated and reimbursed in salt, beads, mirrors, cloth and pork, and allowed to dance at every camp, they will turn out in numbers to carry all necessary equipment. It is not difficult to arrange camps at distances at once reasonable for the walker and far enough apart to make it unnecessary to detain bearers from the previous camp to carry luggage on to the next camp. There are no cart tracks and no carts; and there are many steep ascents and descents on the hill tracks. Good water is everywhere available from clear perennial springs. The hills are far freer from mosquitoes and fever than the plains below; but the traveller who brings a medical assistant and simple medicines with him will find the Marias in great need of elementary medical relief and very grateful for it.

The scenery varies. On the edges of the hills there are often fine views of the plains below, while on the northern and eastern

133 slopes and in the Mangnar and Dantewara Mar villages there are often fine patches of sal and other evergreen trees. On the hill-tops and on slopes exhausted by shifting cultivation, high grass and stunted trees make the country monotonous to the eye and tiring through lack of shade. Where the slopes are newly cleared and have once been burnt for shifting *penda* cultivation, often a small grove of trees is left on the summit, like nothing so much as the top-knot of hair on the crown of a Maria's otherwise roughly-shaved head. But the moment you descend off the rocky plateaux you meet green glades and hurrying streams, or may feel the sudden amaze of a prospect such as that of the blue apex of the lofty Bailadila ridge seen beyond the haze of the Indrawati valley down the valley of a stream that far below the ridge between Itulnar and Hikul races due south to the Indrawati.

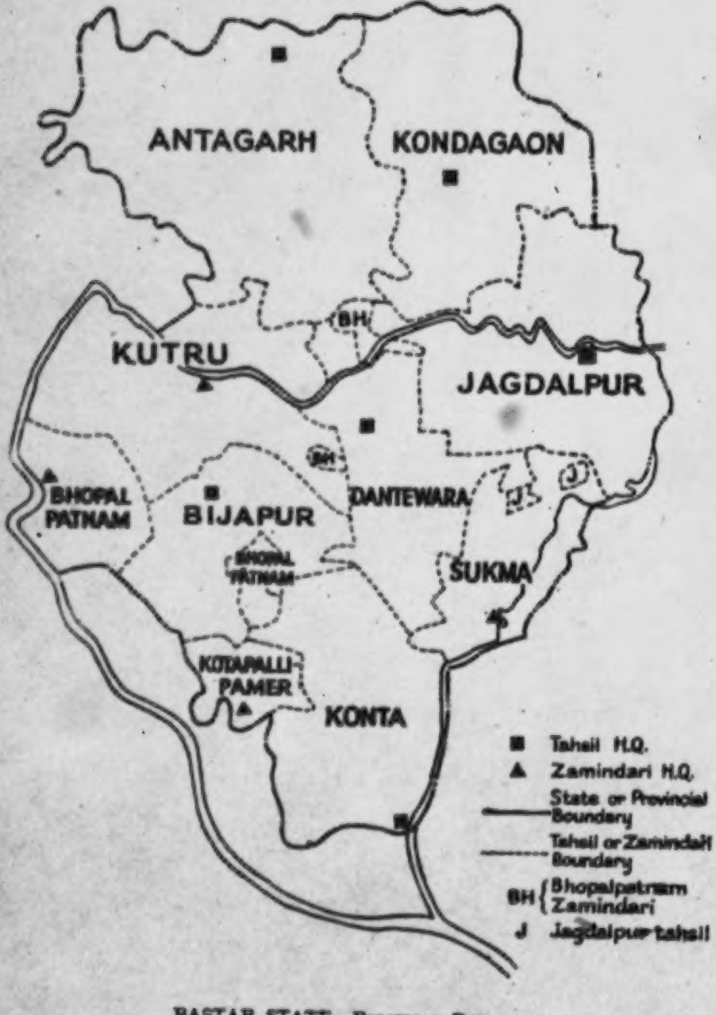
161 There are only between 150 and 160 villages inhabited in all this area of about 1,500 square miles, and there are only 11,500
361 Hill Marias. This means one village in every ten square miles, and less than eight persons to the square mile. In few places can you lose yourself in such solitudes.

North Bastar thus consists administratively of the Antagarh,
635 Kondagaon and Jagdalpur tahsils, half of the Jagdalpur tahsil being south of the Indrawati, and of the portions of the Kutru and Bhopalpatnam zamindaris and the Dantewara tahsil north of the Indrawati.

635 In South Bastar there are the Dantewara, Bijapur and Konta tahsils, and the Sukma, Kutru, Bhopalpatnam and Kotapalli-
491 Pamer zamindaris; these four zamindaris alone survive out of the seventeen or eighteen of old times. A great western road runs 134 miles from Jagdalpur through Gidam, Karli, Matawara, Bijapur and Bhopalpatnam to Timer on the Indrawati, opposite Patagudam in Chanda district, whence there is a forest road to Sironcha; branches south from Gidam and Karli run to Dantewara, with a further extension to Kameli at the foot of the Bailadila hills; north from Gidam to Barsur, and from Matawara to Kutru; and south from Bhopalpatnam to Tarlagudam on the Godavari and thence over the Latpatkandi pass into the Nugur and Albaka taluqs of Madras. A great southern road runs 114 miles from Jagdalpur to Sukma and Konta. A network of forest roads of recent construction links these roads together between Tirathgarh in Jagdalpur tahsil, Katakalian, Kuakonda and Dantewara, or southward from Kuakonda to the Kolab-Sabari at Misma on the Konta road, and to Konta via the Aranpur pass, Jaggergonda and Golapalli; while Bijapur is linked to Cherla and Jaggergonda to Dummagudam, both on the Godavari. With these and other

PLATE III

635


ANTAGARH
KONDAGAON
BH
KUTRU
JAGDALPUR
BH
J
J
BHOPAL PATNAM
BIJAPUR
DANTEWARA
BHOPAL PATNAM
SUKMA
KOTAPALLI PAMER
KONTA
■ Tahsil H.Q.
▲ Zamindari H.Q.
State or Provincial Boundary
Tahsil or Zamindari Boundary
BH {Bhopalpatnam Zamindari
J Jagdalpur tahsil

BASTAR STATE—POLITICAL DIVISIONS
Scale (approx.): 1 inch = 32 miles

635 forest roads there are now few places in south Bastar out of reach
491 of a motor-car, in the fair weather.

Dantewara tahsil is a horseshoe plain between the Tangri 133 Dongri ghats at the edge of Jagdalpur tahsil on the east, the Abujhmar mountains on the north, and the great sword-blade north and south ridge of Bailadila on the west. Its general level is about 400 feet below that of the Jagdalpur tahsil, and it is an intermediate step between the north-eastern plateau and the great plains of South Bastar. The main road descends steeply to it from Killepal and Bastanar. This Dantewara valley may almost be regarded as the fourth natural division of Bastar; though small portions of the east of Kutru zamindari and the north of Bijapur tahsil are on the same level, there is between them and Dantewara tahsil the great barrier of the Bailadila ridge, except where the narrow Indrawati valley separates the northern end of the ridge from the Abujhmar mountains.

The rest of Bastar is sometimes described as one great southern plain varying in level from 600 to 300 feet according to the proximity of the Godavari. Actually, however, there is yet another plateau to be crossed on the western road (and on its forest branches that strike off towards the Godavari) before the traveller descends on to the real Godavari plain. Its level varies from 1,100 to 900 feet (leaving out of account, in this as in all the plateaux and plains of Bastar, the frequent spurs and isolated hills). On the southern road to Konta, and on the forest roads descending from Dantewara to Konta tahsil and Sukma zamindari by the Aranpur, Koriras and Mokpal passes, on the other hand, the traveller gets at once off the northern 2,000 feet plateau, in the case of the southern road, and off the Dantewara valley level in those of the forest roads, to the Godavari or southern plain. This intermediate western plateau may be regarded as the fifth natural division, and called the Kutru-Bijapur plateau. On the north and north-west the Indrawati is its boundary, so far as Bastar is concerned, as far as the hills which begin north of Desli in Sironcha tahsil and cross the Indrawati into Bastar to form the boundary of the Kutru and Bhopalpatnam zamindaris; the gorge in which the Indrawati boils through these hills, the last barrier to its union with the Godavari, is sinister in its magnificence. The hills run thence south-west along the border of the two zamindaris, cross the western road a little west of Bijapur village and continue south-west to the Isalnar pass on the Nelasnar-Cherla forest road, and thence westward till they merge with the foot-hills at the southern end of the Bailadila ridge, a little north of the Aranpur pass.

This Kutru-Bijapur plateau comprises all Kutru zamindari except the two Hill Maria *parganas* north of the Indrawati already mentioned; the isolated Mirthul *pargana* of Bhopalpatnam zamindari sandwiched between the Dantewara tahsil and the south-eastern corner of Kutru zamindari along the western slopes of the Bailadila ridge; and the northern and greater portion of Bijapur tahsil.

The riverain tract spoken of above as the Godavari plain may be treated as the sixth and last natural division. 'Riverain region' would be a better name, as it is not all plain or Godavari valley; there are high hill ranges and other important river valleys. It falls into three sub-divisions. The first and northern is the area drained by the Bhopalpatnam Chintawag, which joins the Indrawati a little south of Bhopalpatnam, and the Indrawati and Godavari valleys from the Kutru-Bhopalpatnam boundary on the north to the tri-junction of Bastar, Hyderabad and Madras near Kothagudam on the Godavari in the south. All of this area except the upper valleys of the Chintawag is in the main territory of the Bhopalpatnam zamindari; the upper valleys are part of Bijapur tahsil. A lofty range of hills begins from the confluence of the Indrawati and Chintawag and runs south-east thence parallel to and at a distance of a few miles from the Godavari as far as the Talper valley; the Bastar-Madras boundary runs along the crests of this range. Its highest peaks are more than 3,000 feet above sea-level. This barrier effectively shuts southern Bijapur off from the Godavari.

The second sub-division is the area drained by the Talper and its tributary the Chintalnar Chintawag. The Talper rises in the highest valley of the Bailadila ridge, almost from the 4,000 feet level, and within a few hundred yards of the source of the Sankani. Thence it flows slightly west of south to join the Godavari a few miles below Cherla. It drains the south of the Bailadila hills and of the hills at the southern edge of the Kutru-Bijapur plateau; the Chintawag takes the drainage of the Aranpur pass and the eastern slopes of the Gogonda-Tikanpalli hills (p. 24 *supra*) and of the Golapalli hills. This sub-division comprises the remainder of southern Bijapur, the outlying Lingagiri block of Bhopalpatnam, the whole of the Kotapalli-Pamer zamindari, and, of the Konta tahsil, that western portion which was once the Chintalnar zamindari. Much of this region is extremely sparsely populated, and wide areas are marked in the new maps as 'dense forest and bamboos' or 'high grass'. The Kotapalli-Pamer zamindari has been almost depopulated by the maladministration of its zamindar, and is therefore now under management by the State; as at one point it is barely three miles from the Godavari at Sirur it has natural advantages which would have attracted settlers from

133 Madras if it had been reasonably managed. The few 'Dorla' villages are the most miserable in Bastar.

The third sub-division is the Kolab-Sabari valley from the southern slopes of the hills at the edge of the 2,000 feet plateau and the Dantewara valley plateau to the border of the Bhadrachalam taluq of Madras on the south. The northern portion of this, the Sukma zamindari, is a punchbowl ringed by the high edges of the Jagdalpur and Dantewara plateaux from Tulsidongri in the north-east counter-clockwise to a point in the south-west of the zamindari where the foot-hills of the Gogonda-Tikanpalli hills approach the Kolab-Sabari near Chikpalli; the hills are continued across the river and the Bastar border still counter-clockwise towards Malkangiri, and thence back to Tulsidongri. There are two small detached portions of Jagdalpur tahsil in the north of the zamindari, around Kukanar and the lower waters of the Thakawara and Kumakoleng rivers respectively. South of Sukma zamindari the valley opens out again to form the main block of Konta tahsil, including the former Bhiji zamindari, the level of which falls nearly to 250 feet above the sea by Konta at its south-east corner; here the Bastar portion of the valley is very narrow, as nearly all the south of Konta tahsil is occupied by the ranges of the Golapalli mountains which at one point reach a height of more than 2,800 feet.

In contrast with north Bastar, with its evergreen moist forests,
132 cool climate, abundant water-supply and often thick population,
133 south Sukma, almost all Konta, the Pamer-Kotapalli zamindari
137 and much of south Bijapur are hot dry regions of deciduous forests,
deficient water and sparse population. The rivers are short stony torrents rushing down in the monsoon to the adjacent Godavari, Talper or Kolab-Sabari, and drying up often before January. Teak is the characteristic timber tree.

There will be found in Appendix I a statement of the areas and
635 populations of the six tahsils and four zamindaris into which modern
162 Bastar is divided. Each of these administrative units is called
after the name of its headquarters; except Jagdalpur with a (1931) population of 10,128, the other headquarters are only villages, and not always large villages; in 1931, of the 2,442 villages in Bastar only five had populations between 2,000 and 2,500, and forty-two populations between 1,000 and 2,000.

Frequent mention was made in this chapter of the smaller
634 '*pargana*' unit. The first use that I can find of this word is in
Appendix IX of Glasfurd's 1862 report, in which, of the forty-three non-zamindari sub-divisions of Bastar, seventeen are called *parganas* and twenty-six *garhs*. In Elliot's 1855 report the names are given of forty-eight *garhs* and nine taluqs into which the non-zamindari

part of the State was said once to have been sub-divided, and of the twenty-seven *garhs* and nine taluqs remaining after some had passed by conquest or other arrangement to Jeypore, Kanker, Bindra-Nawagarh and Nagpur or as *mokasa* grants to Bastar zamindars. The two lists do not correspond, though it seems that what Elliot called taluqs and independent village groups, Glasfurd called *parganas*. There is nothing to show what distinguished a *pargana* or taluq from a *garh*. Reference may again be made to Wills's monograph on *The Territorial System of the Rajput Kingdoms of Mediaeval Chhattisgarh*, in which he summarises the system of the division of kingdoms into conventional numbers of *garhs* or *chaurasis*, themselves sub-divided into taluqs or *barhons* each containing twelve villages, with the heads of the *garhs* and taluqs working with the advice of *panchayats* or committees of village headmen, as 'a system of feudalism superimposed on an earlier tribal organization', the 'feudal element' being largely the conventionalization

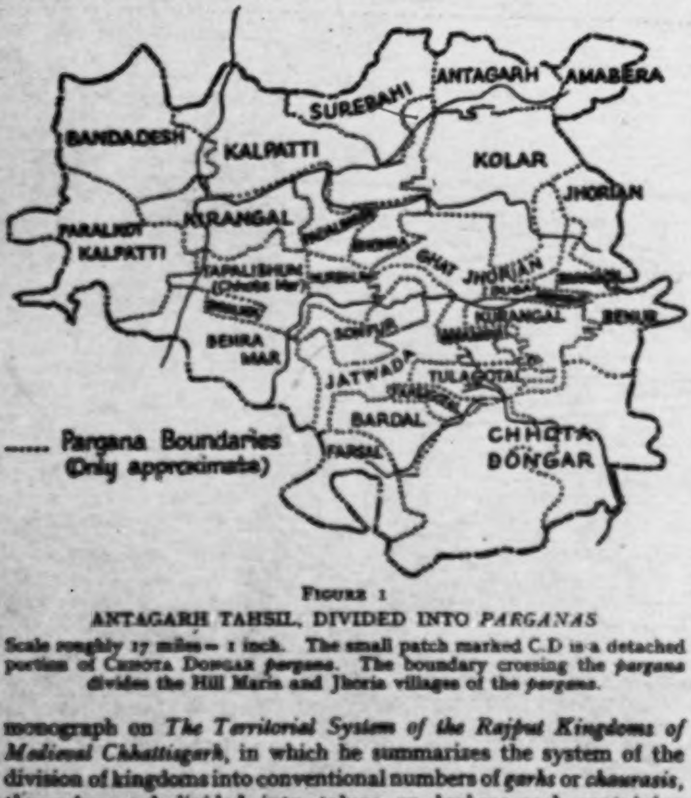

ANTAGARH
AMABERA
SUREBAHI
BANDADESH
KALPATTI
KOLAR
JHORIAN
KURANGAL
PARALKOT
KALPATTI
TAPALISHUM
GHAT
JHORIAN
BEHRA
MAR
JATWADA
KURANGAL
BENUR
TULAKOTAL
BARDAL
FARSAL
CHHOTA
DONGAR
----- Pargana Boundaries
(Only approximate)

FIGURE 1

ANTAGARH TAHSIL, DIVIDED INTO *PARGANAS*

Scale roughly 17 miles = 1 inch. The small patch marked C.D is a detached portion of CHHOTA DONGAR *pargana*. The boundary crossing the *pargana* divides the Hill Maria and Jhoria villages of the *pargana*.

634 of the size of the divisions and the formal linking of them together in subordination to the head of the State and of the heads of the intermediate divisions, and its authority being held in constant check by the democratic tendencies of the tribe. The word *pargana* is familiar in the west of the Central Provinces and in Berar as a unit of the Mussalman organization of the Deccan, and as more and more Indian officials were lent to Bastar from the Central Provinces it probably displaced gradually the less familiar terms *garh* and taluq. I deal below with the tribal organization of the [614] Hill Marias. Their clan-units were and are smaller than the conventional *garh* and often than the *barhon* or taluq; yet in the Abujhmar hills tract of the Antagarh tahsil these clan-units of land are now designated *parganas*. The modern list of *parganas* is considerably larger than those of Elliot and Glasfurd, who described all the Abujhmar country as one taluq or *pargana* named Marian; there are now nine Abujhmar *parganas* in Antagarh tahsil alone, besides others of obvious tribal origin below the hills, and there are twenty-nine *parganas* in all in Antagarh tahsil. These are shown in the map on page 33. It was pointed out in the 1911 Central Provinces Census Report, Part I, p. 239, that the Hill Marias of the Ahiri zamindari are similarly divided into (probably clan) units called *pattis*. The *parganas* of modern Bastar include some obvious former *garhs*, some obvious *barhons* (e.g. Baragaon *pargana* in Antagarh), and some obvious old tribal clan-units, while some have been created in my time; and the word *pargana* is now used of any sub-division of a tahsil or zamindari in which villages are grouped under a group headman or '*pargana majhi*'.

CHAPTER III

THE ETHNOLOGICAL SETTING; THE PRIMITIVE RACES OF BASTAR

IT remains in this chapter, before passing on to the main subject 114 of this book, to outline the distribution of races in Bastar and to some extent in adjacent districts; the major political divisions of India seldom correspond to racial divisions, and each of the main races of Bastar overflows into other provinces or States. This discord between political and racial divisions has not made it easier for students to understand the ethnography of this part of India. An area mainly peopled by primitive Mundari or Dravidian speaking tribes of similar customs, rites and manners extends from the Santal country on the borders of Bengal and Bihar, through Chhota Nagpur and the Orissa States into the Central Provinces and the old Central Provinces States, of which Bastar was the chief, into the Jeypore zamindari now included in the new Orissa province, the East Godavari Agency of Madras, and beyond the Godavari into Hyderabad State. Hitherto the area has been divided administratively between the local governments of four provinces and one major State, Bengal, Madras, the Central Provinces, Bihar and Orissa, and Hyderabad; the many Orissa and Central Provinces States were under the control of the governments of Bihar and Orissa, and of the Central Provinces, so that the student has been spared separate census reports and ethnographic surveys for them. Even so, there have been four census reports and three provincial publications on tribes and castes from which to glean the required information; perhaps the formation of the new Eastern States Agency and the separate province of Orissa will mean two more census reports in 1941. To make matters worse, there is confusion of names; the Parja of Bastar becomes Poroja in Madras official language, and the Bhattra 114 becomes Bottada. The Gond, wherever he speaks his own language, 101 from Central India to the Eastern Ghats and Hyderabad, calls himself Koi or Koitor; yet only in Madras and Hyderabad reports is he called by a name approaching this in sound, Koya, and in the literature of the Central Provinces there has therefore been a tendency to restrict this name to Teluguized members of the race. Everywhere it is more usual to call primitive tribes by the local Hindu name for them, and not by their own name for themselves. So over much of India the prevailing Hindu name Gond, and not Koi, is used; and with his usual passion for standardization the

114 101 official in India has tried gradually to call all the Koitor race Gonds, whatever the name by which they call themselves or the local vernacular name for them, and even to include under the generic term Gond other races or tribes who are not Koitor but only resemble them more or less in their customs. All the Koitor of Bastar have thus been officially classed as Gonds, though the name Gond is still hardly known in Bastar and is regarded by most Koitor of every local variety as an insult, except by Hinduized Gond immigrants from Chhattisgarh. If official and ethnographer would always use the names by which tribesmen call themselves when speaking their own language, we should possibly find many of the so-called branches of the primitive races not branches at all, but merely classified as such in the past owing to unintelligent failure to realize that in different tracts different Hindus have used different names for the same race or tribe.

The difficulty is accentuated by the tendency, familiar throughout India, of local groups of primitive races which are gradually being Hinduized to regard themselves and to be accepted by their Hindu neighbours as separate Hindu castes under new names. So arise such names as Raj-Gond, Raj-Korku, Raja-Muria, Naik Gond, Pit-Bhattra; and it will be seen below how this process has worked in Bastar.

Almost a reverse process is also at work, by which the remnants of forgotten tribes or old confederations of tribes not necessarily akin or speaking the same language have long been known under the common name applied to the whole confederation. The links that used to hold them together disappear, and those sections of the confederation that are socially or culturally more advanced object to being dragged down to the same level in popular esteem as the backward sections, and so prefer to abandon the name given to the confederation in favour of the original or some new name of their own section. The Parjas are a clear example of this, as beyond the Jeypore border they include at least seven different tribes, some speaking Munda, some Dravidian and some Aryan dialects, which differ widely in customs and degree of advancement: the Bastar Parjas except, it is said, the few wilder ones beyond the Kolab-Sabari in Sukma zamindari and around Mount Tulsidongri in Sukma and Jagdalpur tahsil, now invariably call themselves Dhurwa and resent being called Parja. The name Parja appears to be only a corruption of the Aryan term '*praja*' applied to subjects as distinct from the '*raja*' or ruler.

114 659 It is difficult to give figures for the growth or decline of the tribes of Bastar, as the 1931 census was the first since 1891 in which almost all the primitive races of Bastar were not lumped together

under the generic name Gond. In 1931 the tribes enumerated as 114 Gonds in the previous three censuses were separately enumerated under the names Bhattra, Gond, Maria, Muria, Koya and Parja. 659 The totals for these must be added both for 1931 and 1891 in order to see how far the primitive races of Bastar have been increasing. The 1921 figure for Gonds was only 107,503 persons, compared with 285,519 in 1911, and was obviously wrong; the 113,100 persons enumerated in 1921 under Minor Castes should be added to the 107,503 Gonds, though even then the total of 220,603 is below the correct figure. Excluding the Halbas and certain minor aboriginal 161 tribes, the comparative figures are then :—

Year	Gonds
1891	128,442
1901	204,841
1911	285,519
1921	220,603
1931	359,637

The increase in forty years has been 181 per cent. In the same period the total population rose by 69 per cent. from 310,884 to 524,721. The primitive population is more than holding its own.

Halbas were also classified at the census, not altogether rightly, 114 as primitive, and with them and certain other minor primitive tribes added, the primitive population rises to 379,082. Even this 161 does not tell the full tale. Large numbers of the persons returned as members of the Hindu functional castes,[1] the graziers, potters, fishermen, weavers (Mahras), blacksmiths and others, are in reality members of primitive tribes speaking their languages and only differentiated from them by their occupation. There is nothing in outward appearance to distinguish these persons from other aboriginals; they follow their tribal religions whether enumerated as such or as Hindus. I consider that on this account the 1931 primitive total can safely be regarded as 400,000, or 76 per cent.; the census report puts the percentage at 73·6.

The totals given for the tribes formerly treated as Gonds but separately enumerated in 1931 are :—

Bhattra	36,611
Gond	24,407
Maria	146,070
Muria	124,993
Koya	9,988
Parja	17,568

Unfortunately even now, as will be shown later, the classification has been over-simplified, and is of little use for scientific purposes. The only categories about which no doubt can arise are Bhattra

114 161 and Parja, and it is therefore easy first of all to describe their distribution; only the briefest of general remarks will be made about them; I hope at a later date to publish a separate account, at least of the Parjas.

Bhattras and Parjas

161 197 In the ethnographic map on page 40 the Bhattras are shown by the letter A and the Parjas by the letter B. The former alone among the races of Bastar have abandoned whatever Munda or Dravidian tongue they may have once spoken, and now use a corrupt Uriya dialect. In Bastar, except for one or two villages at the south-east corner of the Kondagaon tahsil, the Bhattras are confined to the north-east corner of Jagdalpur, along the Jeypore border, across which they overflow in large numbers into Jeypore and, beyond, Kalahandi State. Their Bastar number in 1891 was 21,477. The use of their language is spreading to other tribes, chiefly the Parjas; it was spoken by 45,830 persons in 1931, which means that 9,219 non-Bhattras speak it. The spread of its use among the Parjas is shown by the fact that only 12,363 Parji-speakers were returned out of 17,568 Parjas. Actually, as Sir George Grierson has admitted, Bhattri might as well be classified as one of the many forms of Halbi as a dialect of Uriya; to the outward ear they sound very similar, and the two languages are mutually intelligible. Halbi always varies according to its proximity to Chhattisgarhi, Telugu or Gondi; and to me Bhattri seems only Halbi influenced by its proximity to Uriya-speaking tracts. Nor are local census enumerators by any means to be relied upon effectively to distinguish Halbi and Bhattri. Grierson's remark of Gondi dialects that the names indicate tribal rather than linguistic differences is true of Halbi and Bhattri at all events.

105 The Bhattras live in open country with miles of good rice cultivation. They are gradually giving up even their very modified form of *dahya* or shifting cultivation, consisting now mainly of the occasional cutting and carting to their rice fields of forest undergrowth, and burning it there as manure. All but twenty-six of them were returned in 1931 as following their tribal religion; and this is really the correct account, though they are considerably more Hinduized than any other tribe classed as primitive in 1931 except the Halbas. The latter, whose religion preserves only slightly less of the tribal element than the Bhattra, are, however, in contrast, all but thirty-six recorded as Hindu. No anthropometric work has been done among the Bastar Bhattras; and there are no data for accepting or rejecting on physical grounds the Central Provinces habit of classifying them as a branch of the Gond race. Traditionally they came with the first Raja of Bastar from Warangal, while over

the border in Jeypore, according to the *Vizagapatam Gazetteer*, the '50,000 Bottadas' say they came from Bastar, and their Uriya dialect is called 'Bastari'. Many of them wear the sacred thread, the right to do so having been purchased in years past by their ancestors from the Raja of Bastar, whose State revenues used once to include regular receipts from such items. They have totemistic divisions, and social and religious customs not unlike those of the Koitor, but with certain marked differences. The tribe is becoming a Hindu caste, with sub-castes differentiated by the purity of their blood; the highest group, or 'Pit' Bhattras, distinguishes itself from the Amnait or Madhya group, on the ground that the Amnaits took women in marriage from other tribes, while the Amnaits similarly held themselves purer in blood than the San group. The Amnait has in the last thirty years gone farther than the Pit, and claims now to be a separate race, far superior to Bhattras. The San group is hardly distinguishable from the ordinary 'Murias' of Jagdalpur.

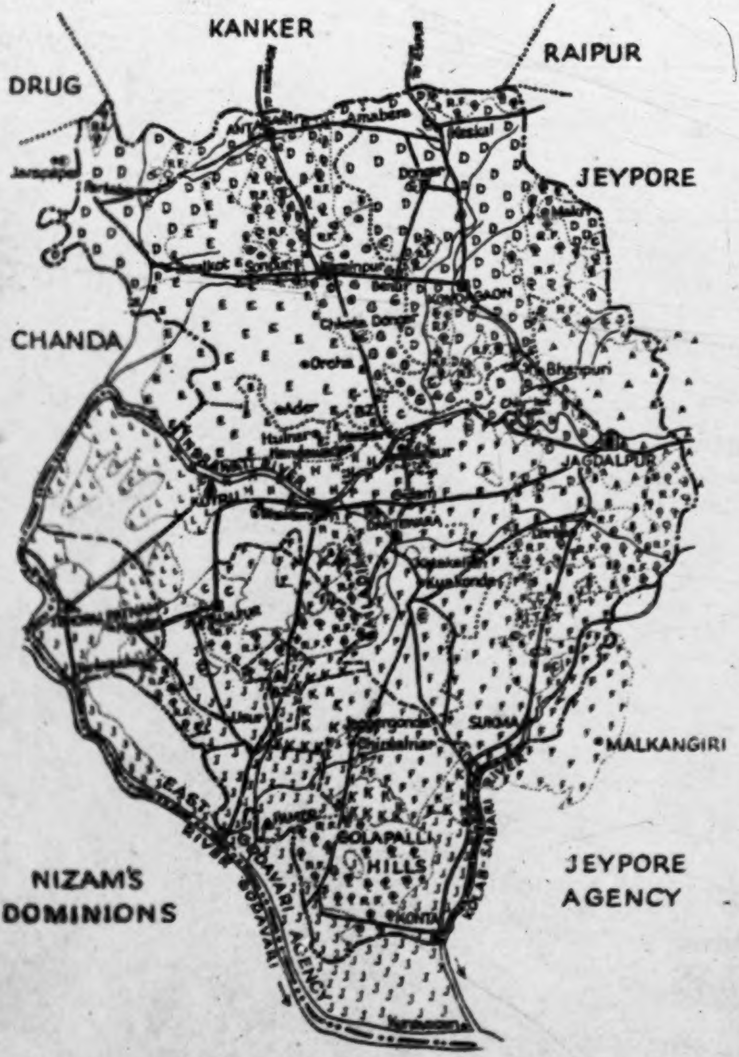
Of the Bastar Parjas it has already been noted that they now call themselves Dhurwa and resent the designation Parja. The majority of them live in the south-east of the Jagdalpur tahsil, north and south of the Kanker Forest Reserve; there is a further group of them in the Kolab-Sabari valley in Sukma zamindari, between Sukma and the Jagdalpur border, extending at one point across the Kolab-Sabari. The northernmost Parjas are more advanced than those south of the Kanker Forest and below the plateau. In the Bhattra villages around Jagdalpur there are isolated families of Parjas, and a Parja designated the village Dhurwa is often the priest of the *Gaon Devi* or Village Mother goddess, besides having to arbitrate in boundary disputes; the indication is that the Parja is the original settler displaced later by Bhattras. So also at the ceremonies preceding the great *pargana* ceremonial hunts through the jungles near Darba, at the head of the pass descending from the Jagdalpur plateau into Sukma, though most of the villages attending are Bison-horn Maria villages, the *pujaris* who officiate at the altar of bows and arrows are Parjas. The Peng Parjas are said to have come with the first Raja from Warangal, but seem now to be confined to the Jeypore zamindari, though it must be remembered that Jeypore contains large tracts of Bastar *irredenta*. The Tugara Parjas mentioned by Glasfurd (para. 82) seem almost all to have left Bastar, though Rai Bahadur Panda Baijnath stated that there were some in Bastar twenty-eight years ago. Their language is described by Grierson as a local and very corrupt variation of Gondi, considerably mixed with Hindi forms. Yet it is an extremely difficult language, unintelligible to

[text continues on p. 41]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

131
162

PLATE IV


KANKER
RAIPUR
DRUG
JEYPORE
CHANDA
Amabera
Keskal
Jarsaipal
Narainpur
Kondagaon
Chhota Dongar
Orcha
Ader
Bhanpuri
Hulnar
Jagdalpur
Kutru
Dantewara
Kuakonda
Konta
Jagargonda
Chintalnar
Usur
Sukma
Malkangiri
Golapalli Hills
Indravati River
East Godavari Agency
Godavari River
Sabari River
JEYPORE AGENCY
NIZAM'S DOMINIONS

BASTAR STATE ETHNOGRAPHIC MAP
Scale (approx.) : 1 inch = 32 miles

Bison-horn Maria and Muria neighbours, and seldom learnt even by those State officials who are excellent interpreters in other dialects; and I fancy that the Hindi admixture is considerably less in ordinary use than in the specimens collected for the Linguistic Survey. It is certainly untrue of Parji that the name indicates rather a tribal than a linguistic difference from Gondi proper. The most marked difference of customs is their style of dancing, which resembles that of the small remnant of the Munda tribe of Gadbas still surviving in two or three villages between them and the Bhattras; they dance in rollicking circles accompanied by their own whistling or by wooden flutes, in a manner reminiscent of certain figures of the 'Lancers', and as different as their dancing dress from the Bison-horn dances of their Maria neighbours, and pleasanter to see and hear than any other dances of Bastar except the Gadba. 105

KEY TO PLATE IV

State or Provincial Boundary	———	Tahsil or Zamindari Boundary	- - - -
Tribal Boundary	....	Roads, P.W.D.	———
Roads, Forest	———	Reserved Forests	♀♀♀
Tahsil Headquarters	■	Zamindari Headquarters	▲
Bhattras	A	Parjas	B
Halbas	C	Murias	D
Marias, Abujhmar or Hill	E	Marias, Bison-horn or Dandami	F
'Jhorias' or Murias probably once Hill Marias, now lowlanders	G	Hill Marias influenced by Bison-horn Marias	H
Koitor of the riverain tract or Dorlas	J	Mixed Dorla & Bison-horn Maria, or latter exposed to Telugu influence	K

131
162

Mixed Dorla & Hill Maria, or Hill Maria who have almost become Dorla L

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

105

Gadbas

The Gadbas are not shown in the ethnographic map. Their three villages used to have the duty and privilege of supplying bearers for the Raja of Bastar's palanquin. They are gradually dying out; their numbers have fallen from 721 in 1901 to 398 in 1931, though the latter figure may be wrong, as 451 speakers of the Gadbi languages in Bastar were returned in 1931. This is probably the only Munda language spoken in Bastar. They are losing their distinctive dress, customs and language; usually the only villagers who remember it are the old women, and the census enumerators have almost certainly wrongly recorded most of them as speaking Gadbi merely because they are Gadbas. One cause of their decline is that some years back alien Hindus were made lessees of two of their three villages and proceeded to introduce non-Gadbas and to allot them Gadba land; the community was too small to offer the resistance made to similar processes by the larger primitive races of Bastar.

Halbas

The Halbas are shown by the letter C in the ethnographic map, scattered in small patches over most of north and central Bastar. I have above, in Chapter I, suggested as a reason for this distribution that they are the descendants of the old *paik* militia garrisons of the headquarter villages of the old *garhs*. Their Bastar number has risen from 13,865 in 1891 to 16,152 in 1931, while the steady growth of the use of their language as the *lingua franca* of Bastar is shown by the increase of the number of persons speaking Halbi as their mother tongue from 127,047 in 1911 to 171,293 in 1931, while 54,798 Gondi-speakers spoke Halbi as a secondary language. Of them it need only be observed here that the one point in which they most resemble their Maria and Muria neighbours is their worship of log-gods exactly similar in form to the tribal gods of the Abujhmar hills and elsewhere, consisting of parallel pairs of oiled and polished logs joined by cross-pieces and adorned with bunches of peacock feathers.

Murias—General

We come now to the remaining bulk of the Gondi-speaking people of Bastar, recorded in the census as Gonds, Koyas, Murias and Marias. Unfortunately none of these designations is scientific, and the figures published in the 1931 census as they stand are of little value to the ethnographer.

Whatever the derivation of the words Maria and Muria, they are not Gondi words. It has been suggested that Muria is formed from a word meaning root, the term meaning 'aboriginal', and that Maria means merely 'man of the woods'. Glasfurd (para. 80) describes the Murias of his time thus :—

> 'These people inhabit the more cultivated plains around Jugdulpore, and extend on the west from Nagatoka to the boundary of Jeypore, and from Seetapore to about thirty or forty miles north of the Indrawatty. They are skilful cultivators, their dress is a waist-cloth or lungotee, with but seldom any covering on the head; their villages are generally clean and comfortable; they have necklaces of red beads and small brass ear-rings; are active, hardy, and well behaved; they eat everything except the flesh of the cow, and keep great numbers of pigs.'

Nagatoka is a little west of Chitrakot falls; if the country east from there to the Jeypore border was then Muria, the Bhattras must have advanced westwards since then into most of their present habitat, or else many who are now San Bhattras were then considered to be Murias. The northward extension thirty or forty miles beyond the Indrawati takes us roughly speaking to the line from Kondagaon east to Amrati in the Makri Forest Reserve, in which there were then several villages. The southward extension to Chitapur (Seetapore) comes practically to the spot where the ethnographic map shows Murias as now beginning south-west of Jagdalpur.

Jagdalpur Murias

The Murias of this tract are very different in various ways from those of Kondagaon and Antagarh tahsils, to whom they consider themselves superior; they say they do not intermarry with them, though this is certainly untrue along the Kondagaon-Jagdalpur border. In Jagdalpur tahsil the Murias have been very exposed to foreign influence, living close to the capital of the State and the Jeypore border; the *parganas* near Jagdalpur itself have had hereditary domestic duties to perform at the palace, and have far more villages leased to foreigners than other parts of Bastar; in the whole tahsil the proportion of persons no longer speaking Gondi as their mother-tongue is higher than elsewhere in the State. Their dancing and music are more akin to those of the Parjas and Bhattras. The signs of totemistic organization are weaker, and the old rules of exogamy are breaking down. Whether or not the Jagdalpur Murias are distinct racially from those of the north it is difficult to say; there is not much apparent physical difference, save in so far as the Muria of the thickly populated open tracts of the 'Padar Raj', as the open country round Jagdalpur is often called, is weedier than the Muria of the north and the Marias of the Abujhmar and Dantewara. Those who no longer speak a dialect of Gondi may easily be descended from Parjas, San Bhattras, or Bison-horn Marias, or from the Murias of the north according to their geographical position, and have lost their distinctive cultural features through being fused together in the detribalizing melting-pot of Jagdalpur; but there may be a substantial 'Muria' nucleus representing an earlier wave of migration southwards than that which peopled north Kondagaon and Antagarh. It is noticeable that in the Jagdalpur country you do not find the *gotul* or boys' (sometimes boys' and girls') dormitory organization that is so distinctive a feature of Kondagaon and Antagarh. It will be seen later that this exists only in embryo in the Abujhmar mountains except at their northernmost extension, and is altogether absent among the Bison-horn Marias and the Koyas of the south. It is tempting to suggest that as the Jhorias of Antagarh tahsil represent Marias who have descended from the Abujhmar mountains, so the Jagdalpur Murias are civilized Bison-horn Marias; but the latter are very distinct from the Jagdalpur Murias, and indeed to some extent antagonistic to them; for the religious or social occasions on which they have to provide a feast of beef they will engage the village thief and send him to steal a cow or calf from the nearest Muria village. A Muria considers himself in Jagdalpur superior to the beef-eating Bison-horn Maria, and does not intermarry.

Jhoria Murias

Coming then to the Murias of Kondagaon and Antagarh, the term as now used for all non-Maria Koitor has again to be condemned as unscientific. Glasfurd rightly excluded from it those whom he described as 'Jhoorias', of whom he says (para. 86):—

> 'The Jhoorias are found principally in the north-western parts about Narayenpoor and Purtabpore, and extend towards Kakeir (Kanker); they are a numerous class, and subsist partly by cultivation and partly by hunting, and on the fruits of the forest. Their dress resembles that of the following caste, the Marias, with whom they may be said to constitute about a third or more of the population of the Bustar Dependency, and whom they resemble in customs and appearance.'

By Marias he meant primarily those whom this book terms the Bison-horn Marias, from whom he rightly distinguished the Marias of the Abujhmar mountains, whom he designated 'Marees'. His remarks on the Jhorias are fairly true if it is borne in mind that it is the Abujhmar Marias whom they resemble, not the Bison-horn, and that he is wrong in extending their country to include north Antagarh around Partabpur as well as the country round Narainpur. The name Jhorias is not now ordinarily used in conversation, since all Koitor in Bastar who have raised themselves socially above the Maria standard nowadays call themselves Murias. Here it is revived as a convenient term for that very distinct type of 'Muria' living around Narainpur and Benur, and the lower valley of the Gudra from a little north of Chhota Dongar to the Indrawati. It strictly speaking applies to the inhabitants of the *parganas* of

Jhorian and Ghat Jhorian (see the *pargana* map of Antagarh tahsil at p. 33); but almost all of Ghat Jhorian was depopulated when the bulk of the *pargana* was included in the Matla Forest Reserve. I should now define as Jhoria Murias or Jhorias the Koitor inhabiting the south of the Kolur *pargana*, the Ghat Jhorian, Jhorian, Baragaon, Narainpur, Dugal, Kurangal and Benur *parganas*, the plains villages of the Chhota Dongar *pargana* of Antagarh, and the Mardapal *pargana* of Kondagaon, which lies to the east of the Chhota Dongar *pargana*. On the ethnographic map all Murias have been shown by the letter D, and the Jhorias by the letter G; in my view the Jhorias are really Marias who have descended from the hills and come into contact with Koitor from the north, the 'Murias' of northern Bastar. There is very little in the outward appearance of the Jhorias to distinguish them from the Hill Marias; their fashions in beads and other ornaments, their coiffures, their physical features, are all similar. They have clans and clan-gods similar to the Hill Marias; the clans have often their own definite territory, the Dugal and Kurangal *parganas* for example being the lands of the Dugalor and the Kurangalor clans; their *pandum* or festivals correspond to those of the Abujhmar; they erect *kotokal* or monoliths to their dead. The northern Jhorias have now learned to dance in 'Muria' style; but to the south and especially in the Mardapal *pargana* of Kondagaon they dance in the traditional *pata-endanna* or 'song-and-dance' style of the Abujhmar, and the dancers are somewhat overdressed in the typical Abujhmar way, with flowing draperies, dancing hats ('*topi*') ornamented with the feathers of the peacock, racket-tailed drongo (*Dissemurus paradiseus*) or other birds, dancing shields (*moghi*) with plumes of peacock feathers and streamers of cloth, and bunches of bells slung over the buttocks of the dancers, though without the strips of cloth tied rib-fashion over the torso till very recently characteristic of the Abujhmar. On the other hand, they[1] have in their villages the full *gotul* or dormitory organization of northern Murias, though they deny[a] that girls share the dormitories with boys as around Kondagaon,[a] and their agriculture is far more advanced than that of the Hill Marias, in that they have ploughs and permanent fields. The Dugalor and Kurangalor clans do indeed admit that some of the hill clans are their *dadabhai* or brother-clans, and that some are their *akomama* or clans with which they may intermarry; but such intermarriage practically never occurs, owing to the distance of the hill villages from those of the lowlands.

---

[1] I am not sure whether this applies to the Mardapal *pargana* and the adjacent part of the Chhota Dongar *pargana*.

[a] [See cat. 116, p. 418 - Pandyat]

Gotul Murias, or Murias of north Kondagaon and Antagarh

105 The remaining 'Murias' are those of the Paralkot-Kalpatti, Bandadesh, Kirangal, Kalpatti, Surebahi, Bhomra, Antagarh and Amabera *parganas* and the larger part of the Kolar *pargana* of Antagarh tahsil, and of all Kondagaon tahsil except the Mardapal *pargana* and that portion between Kondagaon and the Jagdalpur border already mentioned as peopled by Koitor of the Jagdalpur Muria type. All these Murias have traditions of migration into Bastar from the north, from the ancient kingdom of Dhamda, on the downfall of which their god Bhera Pen (Hinduized, Budha Deo) led them in safety from the modern Raipur district into Bastar; the latter story is told in Kondagaon tahsil, but I have not heard it in Antagarh, though Antagarh certainly knows Bhera Pen, the ordinary Great God[1] of the Gonds throughout the British districts of the Central Provinces. In the Amabera *pargana* alone[a] in Bastar is recorded the knowledge of the great Lingo epic of the Gond race, from the Bastar version of which certain extracts were printed by Russell and Hiralal (Vol. III, pp. 49, 61-2). It is likely that north Kondagaon, Amabera, and north Antagarh represent separate streams of migration, and that north Antagarh contains a larger strain of the previous inhabitants, very likely the same stock as that now living in the Abujhmar hills. The Koitor inhabitants of the Kanker State that borders Antagarh and Kondagaon tahsils on the north, though called Gonds in the 1931 census report, are of exactly the same kind, intermarrying still with their Bastar Muria neighbours, and often called Murias by Hindu residents of Kanker; thus it is observed in para. 76 of the *Chhattisgarh Feudatory States Gazetteer*:—

> 'The aboriginal population live in much the same style and have much the same customs as the aborigines of the adjoining State of Bastar, but it is said that they are gradually coming into line with their Hindu neighbours and abandoning their old beliefs. At present, however, in the more remote villages the Gonds adhere to the worship of godlings and to their old social customs. .The girls and boys have their separate sleeping barracks outside the village, and meet near them nightly to play and dance and sing.'

Nearly all of the 80,003 Gonds returned from Kanker State at the 1931 census must be of the same stock as the Murias of north Bastar.

If any particular feature is to be singled out as the distinguishing mark of this 'Muria' group of the Koitor of north Bastar and Kanker, it must be their *gotul* system for the training of the young. The *gotul* is much the same as the Bachelors' House found in

---

[776] [1] Even in British districts I believe the *Bhera Pen* to be merely the 3-, 4-, 5-, 6- or 7-fold god of the clan as distinct from the 3, 4, 5, 6 or 7 *Chuddur Penk* or small gods kept by each family.

[a] [see cat. 116, p. 418. -Analyst]

Indonesia and, in India, among the Oraons and others in Chhota Nagpur and among the Nagas of Assam. In Bastar the Murias and Jhorias of Antagarh have sleeping dormitories for boys only, and repudiate with heat any suggestion that boys and girls share the same dormitory, as is the case among the Murias of north Kondagaon.[a] Nevertheless, the girls assemble every evening by the boys' *gotul*, to join in song, dance and games, and not infrequently in sexual games, and, like the boys, have *gotul* names and ranks some of which involve special duties and responsibilities. The elder boys and girls are almost prefects, charged with the duty of teaching the young the elements of the tribal culture, while all the youth have certain definite fagging to do for the whole village. The Marias of the Abujhmar have a *gotul* in every village, but it is little more than a real dormitory where all unmarried males over the age of ten or so sleep; and, except in the Padalbhum *pargana* and portions of adjacent Maria country abutting on the plain of north-western Antagarh, the distinctive and specialized *gotul* system of training for the young of both sexes is absent. It seems almost completely absent among the Bison-horn Marias and Koyas of Bastar. Lucie-Smith does not mention it in the account of the Marias and other Gonds of Chanda district in the 1869 Settlement Report (one of the indications that the 'Marias' described by him were Koitor of the plains and foot-hills of the Ahiri and other zamindaris, not the Hill Marias of the portion of the Abujhmar mountains that overflows into south-east Chanda). It is only briefly mentioned by Russell and Hiralal in para. 71 of their article 'Gond', where it is said that 'many Gond villages in Chhattisgarh and the Feudatory States' have these '*gotalghar*' (*sic*). There is no definite record of the distribution of the *gotul* outside Bastar in the Central Provinces and the old Central Provinces States. In the *States Gazetteer* it is recorded only in Bastar and Kanker States among the 'Gonds'. I doubt whether it exists anywhere among the Gonds[1] of the Satpura mountains and other parts of the Central Provinces, including Chhattisgarh. It is a possible indication of the existence among these Muria, Jhoria and Hill Maria Koitor of Antagarh and Kondagaon Tahsils who now speak dialects of Dravidian Gondi of a strong element of pre-Dravidian or Austro-Asiatic culture; but it is contrary to expectation, if this be the case, that the *gotul* exists in embryo only among the very primitive Hill 105

---

[1] Enquiry among the Gonds along the Nagpur-Chhindwara border showed no sign of anything resembling a *gotul*; I was told, however, by an intelligent Gond that he had heard many years ago that some such thing existed somewhere beyond Deogarh in Chhindwara District. This is unverified. There is no mention of the *gotul* in any published grammars and vocabularies of Central Provinces Gondi dialects. [171]

[a] [see cat. 116, p. 418. -Analyst]

Marias but fully developed among the comparatively advanced Murias and Jhorias of Antagarh and Kondagaon. I propose to refer to these northern Murias as the Gotul Murias, though it must be remembered that the *gotul* system is equally strong among the Jhorias.

Physically the Gotul Murias conform more to the standard type of Central Provinces Gond than any other Koitor in Bastar; they are short in stature, but well-proportioned, with roundish heads, flat noses, distended nostrils, ugly features, straight black hair and scanty beard and moustache. Eickstedt measured several Murias at Kondagaon in January 1929 and, I gather, found little difference between them and the Hill Marias whom he measured at Handawada on the Indrawati edge of the Abujhmar hills; the Hill Marias are generally in better physical condition, apart from the ravages of yaws and the prevalence of hydrocele, than Gotul or Jagdalpur Murias. So, too, Ramesh Chandra Roy in measuring Hill and Bison-horn Marias during my March 1933 expedition found little physical difference. Yet after living in Bastar for a time one is soon able to distinguish between a Muria and a Hill or Bison-horn Maria, by something in their facial appearance, not merely by differences of dress, though one will often confuse a Hill Maria and a Jhoria. The Maria of both types has a proportion of almost leptorrhine faces and of skins pale copper in hue, while heights of 5 ft. 9 in. are not unknown among them.[1]

To summarize the account of the so-called Murias before proceeding to discuss the Marias and Koyas, they fall into three main groups, the Jagdalpur Murias of the Jagdalpur tahsil and the south of Kondagaon tahsil; the Jhoria Murias of the foot-hills of the Abujhmar mountains in south-west Kondagaon and in Antagarh tahsils; and the Gotul Murias of north Antagarh and most of Kondagaon. These divisions are roughly endogamous, though not now recognized

Murias—Summary

---

[1] Cf. Hutton, India Census Report, 1931, p. 446:—' The vague suggestion of the mongoloid, which is so often given by the appearance of the hillmen of Chhota Nagpur, of Bastar State in the Central Provinces and of the Madras Agency Tracts, may be due to a strain of Pareoean blood which has come in by sea from the coast. One is insistently reminded in these areas of the Assam hill tribes, and both Haddon and Buxton have drawn attention to this strain, which struck the present writer quite independently and contrary to his expectations; and the admitted proto-australoid element in these tribes is no obstacle to this, since it must have extended at some period throughout what is now the archipelago to the Australian mainland, apart from the probability of its absorption on the mainland. Haddon says (*Races of Man*, p. 108), " there is something in the facial appearance of many Kolarians which enables an observer to pick out a typical inhabitant of Chhota Nagpur from a crowd of southern Dravidians, and among some (Munda, etc.) there is often a reminiscence of Mongoloid traits ", and the truth of this is incontestable.'

by separate vernacular designations. The Jagdalpur group is detribalized by palace contacts and the proximity of Halbi and Uriya speaking elements both in Bastar and in Jeypore.[1] The Jhoria group are probably Hill Marias settled in the plains. The Gotul Murias have definite traditions of immigration from Raipur and the north. 'Muria' is a term coined by non-Koitor for those Koitor who are somewhat less un-Hinduized than the primitive Marias, and is used by any section of Marias as soon as it wishes to claim social advancement. The Bastar official applies it not only to the three sections of Murias classified above, but also to the Koyas and some of the Dorla Koyas of the south, and to the more advanced Bison-horn Marias of Dantewara and Bijapur. The census figures of Murias therefore contain various Koitor from Kutru and Bhopalpatnam zamindaris and from Konta and Bijapur tahsils who should have been enumerated as Koyas or Marias. 105

On the latter account perhaps about 15,000 should be deducted from the census total of 124,993 Bastar Murias, leaving a round figure of 110,000. About 32,000 of these are Jagdalpur Murias, 17,000 Jhorias and 61,000 Gotul Murias. These are very approximate figures, roughly calculated from the total populations of the different charges into which each tahsil or zamindari was divided for census purposes.

The Marias—General

It has more than once been indicated in the preceding pages that I divide the so-called Marias into two divisions, the Hill Marias of the Abujhmar mountains, and the Bison-horn Marias. The former call their land Metabhum or 'Highlands', and call themselves (and are called by their neighbours on the plains and plateaux of Antagarh, Kondagaon, Jagdalpur, Dantewara and Bijapur) Meta Koitor, the Highland Koitor. To avoid confusion in the mind of any later investigator, it should be observed that this name is also given to themselves by the Bison-horn Marias living on the high edges of the Jagdalpur and the Dantewara tahsils in contrast to their brethren below in Dantewara or Sukma and Sukma or Konta respectively. If, however, a native name is needed for the Marias of the Abujhmar mountains, Meta Koitor could well be adopted; the general level of their villages is far higher than that of any other villages in Bastar. Hill Marias, however, is the term which I shall use, the word Maria being now familiar in ethnographic literature. By the Hill Maria the men of the plains, be they Muria, Jhoria or Bison-horn Maria, are called Dor Koitor, Hatiya Koitor or Kalpatti 101

---

[1] Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao in an article on the Gonds of the Eastern Ghats, India, published in *Anthropos*, 1907, says that the Gonds of parts of Jeypore are known as Murias.

101 Koitor, all meaning Lowland Koitor, and the plains below are either Dorbhum, Hatiyabhum or Kalpatti; Dor Koitor and Dorbhum, the terms most commonly used, are probably the source of the expression Dhur Koitor said to be used fairly generally in the Central Provinces to designate the ordinary Gond as distinct from the one who gives himself social airs as a Raj-Gond; a Gondi word has been assimilated to the Hindi '*dhur*' or '*dhul*' meaning 'dust', and the Gond commoner referred to as the 'Dust' Gond. Hatiya-bhum is simply the land of the *hat* or bazaar. *Kalpatti* is the ordinary Halbi term for lowlands, which we have already seen applied as the name of two *parganas* in Antagarh. Hatiya is similarly the name of a *pargana* in the north of Kondagaon.

Hill Marias

161 The Hill Maria tracts are shown by the letter E in the ethnographic map. An account of their country and distribution has been given already in Chapter II, pages 26-8. The estimate of 11,500 population is fairly accurate; I examined the actual census returns of all the Hill Maria villages except the five included in the outlying Mangnar *pargana* of Bhopalpatnam zamindari, and obtained a total of 11,361 (5,702 males and 5,659 females). There can only be 140 or 150 persons at the most in the Mangnar villages. Since the census, many Hill Marias have come back to the Abujhmar, chiefly from the Ahiri zamindari; it was found when the poll-tax settlement was effected in 1932 that 240 able-bodied males had so returned; probably, therefore, the Hill Maria population is now just over 12,000 in Bastar. There had in the past been a considerable exodus of Marias from the old Paralkot zamindari, owing to the zamindar's oppression. As they consider the new conditions in Bastar better than those in Ahiri, more may be expected to drift back into Bastar.

The tract is extremely homogeneous. In 22 Hill Maria villages in Kutru with 1,443 Hill Marias the only non-Marias are 38 Rawats and 1 Halba; in 9 Hill Maria villages in Dantewara there are 879 Marias to 3 Telanga, 98 Rawats and 19 Mahras. The Rawats are only in the villages near the plains where they are employed by Marias to tend cattle and are beginning to teach them the use of the plough and the milking of cattle; they speak Maria as fluently as Halbi, and in outward appearance are scarcely distinguishable from Marias. Most of the Hill Maria villages are in Antagarh, and have hardly any outsiders except occasional Rawats or liquor contractors. The few blacksmiths are really Marias, knowing no
564 other language than Maria, having the same clans as the Marias and still occasionally marrying Maria girls; though, as among other tribes, there is always a tendency to look down on the blacksmith,

I: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

and to make him live by himself on the outskirts of the village, so 564
that in the end he becomes almost a separate low caste. This, however, has not gone nearly as far among the Hill Marias as among the Bison-horn.

Hill Marias of Indrawati valley, influenced by Bison-horn Marias or Dorla Koitor

To the south, along the Indrawati valley, the Hill Marias are 177
influenced strongly by the Bison-horn Marias, and the area concerned is marked on the map by the letter H. The influence of the Bison-horn Marias gets less as you go west down the valley towards Kutru, and beyond Kutru is replaced by that of the Telugu-influenced Koitor of the riverain tract, known generally in those parts as Dorlas. There is no doubt that the inhabitants of most of these villages near the river were once Hill Marias. They seem to have been enumerated as Murias in the [161]
1931 census, and are included in the 15,000 persons whom I have indicated at the end of my account of the Murias as wrongly enumerated at census as Murias. Where the Hill Marias are the immediate neighbours of the Bison-horn Marias, the influence of the latter is strong. In theory, according to local legend the 101
Mander, a tributary running more or less east to west and joining 113
the Indrawati on its *southern* bank near Barsur, is the boundary between the two kinds of Marias, with the Indrawati as the boundary west of the confluence. Here the Hill Marias know the Bison-horn Marias as Dandami Koitor; but the name is not universal in Bastar, and I have therefore preferred to call them Bison-horn because the wearing of bison-horns by their male dancers is so obvious a peculiarity of the tribe. Formerly, the legend says, Pat Raja, the log-god of Mornar in the Mangnar *pargana* who is regarded almost as the overlord of all the log-gods of the Hill Marias, and his wife's brother Use Modia, the log-god of the Lekami clan at Ghotpal, a large Bison-horn village south of the Indrawati, between Barsur and Gidam, divided up the Hill and Bison-horn Marias into *dadabhai* and *akomama* clans (brother-clans and wife-clans), and in those days the Hill Marias used to intermarry with the Bison-horn, and each used to attend the other's festivals. One day, as the Gumalor clan of Hill Marias, which occupies a group of villages in Bhairamgarh Mar, Dantewara Mar and Mangnar, was trooping to Ghotpal to dance at the Koqsar festival there, carrying their axes on their shoulders, a Gume with his axe accidentally severed the *sem* bean vine of the Old Widow (*Kuram Mutta'i*), who thereupon put a curse on all the Hill Marias and forbade them ever again to come south of the Mander river for social or religious purposes. Since then, according to the Hill Marias, intermarriage 582
and participation in each other's festivals has ceased. On the other

582 hand some Hill Marias say that there is no theoretic obstacle to
intermarriage, but that actually 'it isn't done', though they
occasionally take part in each other's festivals. The Bison-horn
177 style of dancing with long *dol* drums is gradually spreading among
535 the lower villages just north of the Indrawati. Hudala Karka,
for example, some eight miles from Barsur and on the northern
bank of the river, now dances entirely in Bison-horn style, and
claims to be a Bison-horn village, the claim being admitted by the
Bison-horn Maria *pargana* headman in theory, and in practice by
intermarriage with undoubted Bison-horn villages[a]: but in several
houses I found old Hill Maria dancing shields (*moghi*) and buttock-bells,
and the older men admitted that when they were young they
177 danced in the Hill Maria style. Another sign of this is that Hurra
Gunda, the log-god of the Tamo clan at Tumirgunda, near Hudala
[176] Karka, is also the log-god of the Atami clan of Hudala Karka and
of two other Atami villages south of the Indrawati. The clan-priest
of the god is a Tamo, and the Tamo villages of Tumirgunda and
Padmeta still dance in Hill Maria style. In a few years, therefore,
the Bison-horn Marias will have adopted the valley villages north
of the Indrawati; the *pargana* headman already virtually claims
them as such, since they are under his direct jurisdiction and not
that of the Hill Maria *chalki* or assistant appointed to help him
manage the eight Hill Maria villages of his *pargana*. In speech, too,
[197] they are approximating more and more to the Bison-horn Marias,
as there is a marked absence of the harsh guttural sounds so characteristic
of the Hill Maria language, and they use the Bison-horn
technical social and religious terms.

101 Westward along the valley, as observed above, Bison-horn
Maria influence gets less. For a few miles, roughly from Nelasnar
177 to Jegur on the Matawara-Kutru road, and in the village of Ketulnar
beyond Jegur, the people are now known as Murias but are really
Hill Maria stock, and still dance in Hill Maria style. Ketulnar
still intermarries with the hill villages of the Kutru Mar *pargana*.
The villagers of Bheriabhum, on the south bank opposite their
former village of Pali, five or six miles north of Bhairamgarh,
are of the Hill Farsal clan, and cannot be distinguished from
Farsalor of the hills. In the hill villages above the valley I
verified occasional marriages with girls from the valley villages and
vice versa.

101 The tract west and south-west of Kutru, marked by the letter
L on the ethnographic map, contains a very scanty population,
which appears to be Hill Maria in origin, much modified by contact
with the Telugu-influenced Dorla Koitor from the south, who are
shown by the letter K. These mixed elements also were returned

[a] [See cat. 116, p. 418. - Analyst]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

as Muria at the census, while the actual Dorla Koitor appear to have been shown under Gond. 181

Bison-horn Marias, Koyas and Dorlas

The census total of Marias was 146,070. I estimated at the end of my account of the Murias that 15,000 Marias and Koyas had been wrongly enumerated as Murias. This raises the total of Marias to 161,070, counting all the 15,000 whether Koyas or not as Marias, for reasons which will appear below. My adjusted census figure for the Hill Marias was 11,500. The mixed Hill-Bison-horn villages except Tumirgunda were excluded from this, and for demographic purposes may be regarded as Bison-horn. The valley villages occupied by Hill Maria stock and the villages of mixed Hill Maria and Dorla stock at the most have 3,500 inhabitants, though spread over a large area. Excluding them and the 11,500 pure Hill Marias from the 161,070, we get a balance of 146,070 as the strength of the Bison-horn Marias. To this I would add the 9,988 returned at census as Koyas, giving a total of 156,058 Bison-horn Marias. Of these, about 50,000 are in Jagdalpur, 60,000 in Dantewara, 7,000 in Konta, 3,000 in Kutru, 1,000 in Bhopalpatnam, 26,000 in Sukma, and 9,000 in Bijapur. 161

The southern borders of this race are fairly clear when enquiry is made on the spot, but very difficult to ascertain from previous literature owing to the lack of precision of nomenclature. Much trouble has arisen from the word Koya. Glasfurd did not define Koyas or give their habitat in the report already quoted. In a report on the ethnography of the old Upper Godavari District including Bastar, printed in a collection of papers for a Central Provinces ethnographic exhibition in the sixties, he wrote :— 181

> 'Along the southern boundary we find the Telingas tolerably pure, but with a large mixture of intermediate castes, such as the Koys and Naikwars, which last the late Mr. Hislop classed among the Gonds. Proceeding inward we find the Telingas cease, and the Koys and Gottawars become the sole inhabitants. The former belong also to the Gond family; but from their vicinity to the Telingas they have acquired many of their words, and as the latter are the superior race, the Koys ape their manners a good deal. The Gottawars are inferior to the Koys in caste; but not so in appearance nor in physical conformation. Where they live close to Telingas, they also have acquired many of the Telugoo words; but they do not, as the Koys, ape Telinga manners.
>
> 'Proceeding still farther towards the interior, we find the Gottawars the prevailing class, and in the centre they appear merely to change their name; for the Maria is in no wise different from the Gottawar.'

In the classified list of races annexed to his report he gives as habitat for Koys the 'banks of the Godavery, Pranheeta and Savery rivers, and the Beejee, Potukul, Kotapilly, Veejapore, Soonkoom and Bhopalputnum Talooks of Bustar'; for Gottawars

101 'Seroncha Talook and Bhopalputnum, Veejapore, Chintulnar, Dunteewara, Kootroo and Barsoor Talooks of Bustar'; and for Marias 'Kootroo, Chintulnar, Dunteewara and Veejapore Talooks of Bustar, and also that part of Bustar called Ulrugmad[1]'. He notes that the Gotta language is nearly allied to the Maria. He uses [103] Telugu versions of Bastar place names, just as the Survey of India did in the old topographical survey maps; by Savery, Beejee, Potukul, Kotapilly, Veejapore and Soonkoom he meant Kolab-Sabari, Bhiji, Phutkel, Pamer-Kotapalli, Bijapur and Sukma. Bhiji is the old name of the south-eastern part of Konta tahsil; Phutkel is a former zamindari in the Talper riverain tract of Bijapur tahsil, while Chintulnar is now in Konta tahsil, occupying the tract at the foot of the Aranpur pass. Except, therefore, for his inclusion of Sukma in the region of the Koyas, his distribution of the 'Koys, Gottawars and Marias' corresponds very closely with the areas shown in the ethnographic map for Dorlas, mixed Maria-Dorla, and Marias; in his Report on the Dependency of Bastar he had stated that Marias constituted 90 per cent. of the population of Sukma.

114 Various articles were published between 1876 and 1881 on the Koyas, whom he rightly calls Kois, by the Rev. John Cain, for many years a C.M.S. missionary at Dummagudem on the Godavari in the Bhadrachalam taluq of the East Godavari Agency, and only a few miles from the south-western corner of the Konta tahsil. These articles were the basis of the article on the Koyas in Thurston's *Tribes and Castes of Southern India*[2]. He wrote in the first of these:—

> 'I propose to notice first the Kois, a tribe already partially described in Captain Glasfurd's reports and Colonel Haig's report of his visit to Jagdalpur, and also in the Census Report for 1871 of the Madras Presidency. These people are to be found in the country extending from the banks of the Indravati, Bastar, down to the neighbourhood of Kammammet in the Nizam's country. All those in the plains have a tradition that about 200 years ago they were driven down from the plateau in the Bastar country by famine and disputes, and this relationship is also acknowledged by the Gutta Kois, i.e. the hill Kois who live in the highlands of Bastar. Up to the present (1876) time I have had but little intercourse with the Gutta Kois, and the manners and customs described in this paper will be those of the Kois dwelling in the Bhadrachallam taluka.'

Elsewhere he writes that the Gutta Koi of the Bastar plateau 'look down with some degree of contempt on the lowland Koi', who are called Gommu Koi, or Koi of the river bank, *gommu* being a Telugu word for horn or tusk, used in the Upper Godavari district to mean the banks of the Godavari. He says that the Gutta Koi also generally refer to the lowlanders as '*mayalotilu* or rogues' and say that long ago their ancestors lived with them on the Bastar plateau, but went once to visit a zamindar in the plains, and so liked his country that they settled there and persuaded many others to follow them, and thereafter often harried the plateau in secret marauding expeditions. He refers to the lowlanders as calling themselves Doralu, from the Telugu honorific *Dora* or 'lord', and being called by the Telugus Koi Doralu. The specimens he gives of their language show it to be a Gond dialect very greatly corrupted by Telugu influences, not only the vocabulary but even verb and noun inflexions being Teluguized.

---

[1] An obvious misprint for 'Ubujmard', Glasfurd's spelling of Abujhmar.

[2] Cain's articles are:—'The Bhadrachallam Taluka, Godavari District, S. India', *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. V, 1876, p. 357 et seq.; 'The Bhadpachallam and Rekapalli Taluqas', *ibidem*, Vol. VIII, 1879, p. 33 et seq., and p. 219 et seq.; Vol. X, 1881, p. 221 et seq.; 'The Koi, a Southern Tribe of the Gond', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Bengal*, Vol. XIII, 1881, p. 410 et seq. There were others in certain missionary journals, which I could not trace.

In the *Godavari District Gazetteer*[1] the article on Koyas clearly deals with the lowlanders only, and speaks of the self-importance with which they know that their title *Dora* means 'lord' and insist on being given it, tolerating the alternative '*Mama*' (maternal uncle) from other castes, but disliking being called Koyas.

The designation Gottor is now common among the Telugus and Telugu Koyas of south Bastar for the Marias of the plateaux and the 'Koyas' at the foot of the plateau in Konta tahsil and Sukma zamindari. No one need worry about it as indicating any special race; it is simply a Telugu term for Hill Koitor. Glasfurd, though he wrongly spoke of the Gottor as a separate division, yet righted matters by pointing out that there was no real difference between them and the Marias of Dantewara. Naturally, Bison-horn Marias living on both sides of the southern edges of the plateau would be more influenced by the Telugus than those in the centre and north of the plateaux.

But there remains a real distinction between the Bison-horn Marias, even those who live along the southern fringes of their country, below the passes, and the Koyas of the plains. The latter are known as Dorla, but this is obviously a corruption of Dor Koitor, their lands being to the Bison-horn Marias of the Dantewara and Jagdalpur plateaux, Dorbhum or lowlands. Your Telugu or Englishman writing in Telugu surroundings may say that the social status of the lowland Koya is greater than that of the Hill Koya; but your hill man will always look down with a healthy contempt on the plains man. Cain indeed realized this, but perhaps hardly understood the foulness of the abusive Chhattisgarhi term *mailotia* which he gives with a capital initial letter as the Hill Koya's name for the lowland Koya. The latter knew he was despised by the highlander, and with the self-assertiveness that is the typical fruit 101 186

101 186 of the inferiority complex palmed off his name Dor Koi or Lowland Koi on the ignorant Telugu as Dora Koi, and has proceeded to object to the name Koi and demand always the name Dora or Dorla, simultaneously impressing on the Telugu how superior he is to the Highlander.

361 I have verified these points by personal investigation supplemented by reliable information from assistants directed to make enquiries on specified lines. When the traveller descends the Aranpur pass, he finds the villagers at the foot of the pass in such villages as Gumadasaka, Bikrampalli, Kondasaoli, Kamargudem, Kodmair, Karrigudem, Bayampalli, Kundair, Ursangal, Durandarbha, Michiguda, Vadri, Silger, Mandimarka, Singaram, Tarlaguda Banjepalli and Durma inhabited by people indistinguishable from the Bison-horn Marias above the pass, or by Maria Lohars. The only difference is a noticeable Telugu influence on their Maria dialect. At Jaggergonda, six or seven miles beyond the foot of the pass, he meets the first Telugu-speaking non-Koitor village, and just beyond this comes to the first Dorla villages, Rajpenta, Achkat and Kamaram. Southwards in the country covered by the new Ordnance Survey one-inch maps, on sheet 65 F/3, Singaram in square B1, Puvarti, Junaguda and Rayagudem in A2, Chimili, Surpanguda, Kistaram and Morpalli in B2, all the villages in A3, and Tadmetla, the only village in B3, are Dorla villages. Generally speaking, all the riverain tracts of Bhopalpatnam zamindari, Bijapur tahsil, Kotapalli-Pamer zamindari and southern Konta tahsil are Dorla villages, though here and there will be found Gottor Koya, i.e. Bison-horn Maria villages in Konta Dorla country such as Tokanpalli, Burkapalli and Chintaguppa (in map 65 F/3, square C3).

162 These Dorla at census refused to call themselves Koya, and were not returned as such but as Gonds; and they are the principal element in the 19,426 professing tribal religion out of the 24,407 Bastaris returned as Gonds in the 1931 census. The 4,981 Hindu Gonds returned are mostly Dorlas from the Lingagiri *pargana* of Bhopalpatnam and the adjacent parts of Bijapur, who have become Lingayats, wearing a *rudraksha* bead in a silver box or a Shiva *lingam* slung on a thread.

It will be clear, therefore, that the 9,988 persons returned at the census as Koyas are not the Dorla or lowland Koyas returned as Koyas in the East Godavari Agency. They are the Bison-horn Marias living at the foot of the passes in Konta and Sukma and slightly influenced by Telugu contacts. Of the Koya dialect of Gondi returned in 1931 as spoken by 6,172 persons in Bastar, however, it is probable that it represents the speech of the Dorla

Koyas, since it alone, being greatly corrupted by Telugu, presents any marked difference from the Maria and Muria dialects. 162

Intermarriage is frequent between the Bison-horn Marias of the plateaux and those at the foot of the passes, but now never occurs between them and the Dorla, the latter having become a true endogamous group.[1] 582

The Koyas of the Malkangiri taluq of Jeypore, across the Bastar border from the Sukma zamindari and north-east Konta, seem on the contrary to be Bison-horn Marias.[2] Intermarriage still takes place between the Marias of Sukma and the 'Koyas' of Malkangiri; and these same Sukma clans intermarry with the clans on the Dantewara and Jagdalpur plateaux. In fact, intermarriage is not unknown between Dantewara and Malkangiri clans, and it is not unusual for a man wanted by the police in Dantewara to abscond to his fellow-tribesmen, possibly relatives, in Malkangiri. The headmen of Edpal and Dodpal on the Dantewara-Sukma border 166 stated that the Koitor of Malkangiri had migrated there some generations back from the Bailadila mountains, and named relatives among them belonging to the Sodi clan. Bailadila had in fact been practically deserted long before its inclusion in the Bailadila Forest Reserve; and some superstition attaches to it which prevents surrounding Maria clans from settling there, though more than one attempt has been made to found permanent forest villages so as to obviate the labour now entailed on the villages below when the Maharaja and his officials go there for the hot weather. The most tempting offers fail to attract settlers; even as labourers the Marias profess fear of staying on the hills unless accompanied by a European, over whom Elma Pen, the god of the mountain, has no power. The only chance, they say, of re-settling the place is to get hold of a descendant of the original inhabitant, preferably of the clan-priest (*modul-waddai*), who knows the godlings and demons of the hills.

[p. 58 is blank]

---

[1] Glasfurd in the ethnological papers already quoted commented thus on physical differences between the lowlanders and highlanders of South Bastar. 'The Koys are very dark, quite as much so as the Telingas; while the Gottawars and Marias are generally copper-coloured, some being quite fair. Their faces are rather broad than long, and they have small eyes, which, with the almost entire absence of hair on the face, gives these altogether a strongly marked Tartar-like physiognomy.' [142]

[2] It is important to remember that the Dorla also use bison-horn or buffalo-horn dancing head-dresses, and in other ways also show that they were once the same people as those whom I term Bison-horn Marias, as indeed the traditions of both peoples have been seen to assert.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

000

PART II

Personal Appearance and Characteristics

[p.59]

[p.60 is blank]

Chapter IV

Personal Appearance ; Physical Powers and Endurance ; Bodily Attitudes ; Cleanliness ; Hair-dressing ; Dress and Ornaments of (a) Hill, (b) Bison-horn Marias ; Weapons and Tools

Appearance

142 To the amateur observer few things are so hard as correctly to record the physical appearance of tribes, and I must leave the reader to draw his own conclusions from the illustrations of individuals in Plates I, V to VII, XI, XV, XVII to XIX and XXIII, and the Appendix on anthropometric measurements by Mr. R. C. Roy. Certain very general remarks may, however, be made. In stature Marias of both types seem greater than the average Central Provinces Gond ; though 141 the general average for men may not exceed 5 ft. 5 in., yet tall individuals are by no means unknown, especially among the Bison-horn Marias of the Dantewara valley and the adjacent parts of the Jagdalpur tahsil ; there were two convict warders undergoing twelve years' sentences for murder in Jagdalpur Jail until recently from near Palnar, between Kuakonda and Aranpur, who were fine physical specimens and nearly 6 ft. in height. Among the Hill Marias it is perhaps rare to see anyone more than 5 ft. 8 in. high.

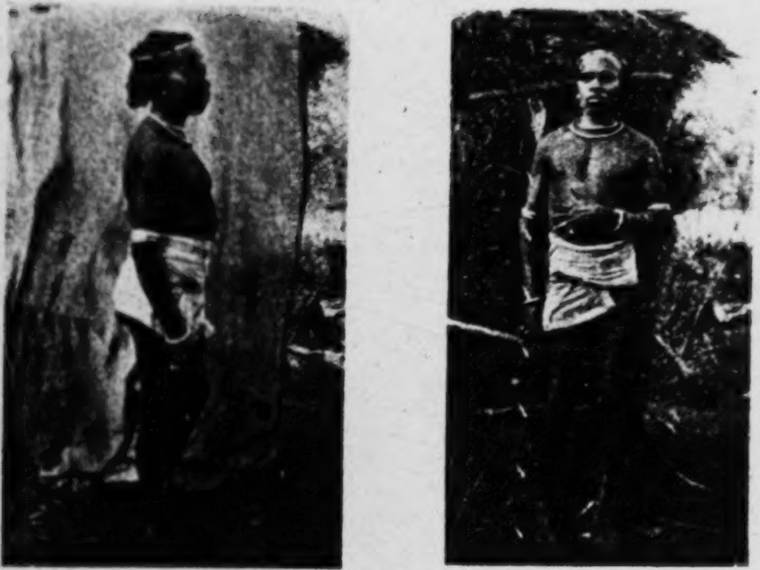
The ordinary Gond type, dark-skinned, with straight, coarse, 142 black hair, little or no beard and moustache, platyrrhine nose, prognathous, wide, downward-curving mouth with thick lips, in fact ' india-rubber faced ', with squat but fairly proportioned body, is not unknown among the Marias, especially the Hill Marias towards the fringes of the hills, and the Bison-horn Marias in contact with the Telugu in the south. But the absence of facial hair has been exaggerated by past observers, possibly because at least in the Abujhmar mountains it is usually the unmarried youths on the verge of manhood who are deputed by the villages as camp followers ; men with moustaches or small pointed beards are not uncommon. The growth of hair is much less than that of the European, and a shave is not a frequent necessity. Possibly the Bison-horn Maria grows more than the Hill Maria. Flat noses are not as common as among the Central Provinces Gonds, and at times an almost aquiline nose will be met. The nostrils are, however, always distended, and presumably most Marias of both types would be mesorrhine, tending to platyrrhine with a few leptorrhine

142 individuals. The prognathous jaw is common, but far from universal; and one fairly often meets fair individuals with pointed faces tapering towards the chin. Young girls are frequently [304] graceful, light in colour, and, but for the disfigurements of tattooing, often pretty; but with age and child-bearing, long journeys to the market and heavy field work, they soon coarsen and darken. [551] Colour varies from nearly black to pale copper; but really black skins are uncommon enough to give rise to names or nicknames. The copper complexion is perhaps commoner among the Bison-horn than the Hill Marias, but the really pale copper face is more often met in the hills. Lips are full rather than thick. Eyes are almost invariably brown; I have met occasional individuals with grey or greenish-grey eyes accompanied by hair of a dirty rust colour and light complexions. The hair is black and generally straight, but many have natural waves that would do credit to European coiffeurs, [302] and a few have naturally frizzy hair. Some young 'bloods' among the Bison-horn Marias seem to have artificially curled hair. [164] The teeth are usually worn down, discoloured and neglected, and caries is common. The richer Bison-horn headmen sometimes have [304] small gold plugs, the size of a pin's head, inserted in the front of their upper front teeth.

482 **Physical powers and endurance**

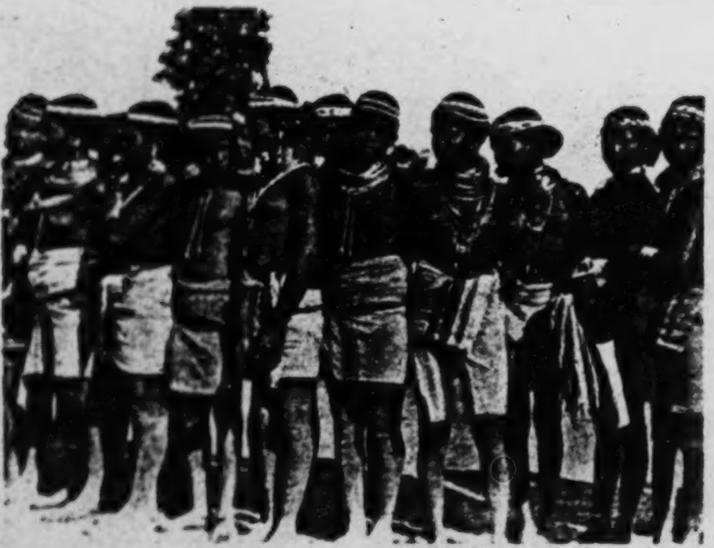
[516] The bodies are usually well developed, and the easy, upright carriage of the Maria displays to advantage his good chest, buttocks and calves. The Hill Maria seldom if ever carries weights on his head, but on his left shoulder, supported by his left arm bent over the top of his burden. Actually he regards the woman as the natural carrier, as may be seen when he goes with her to the market, and almost the only time when he may be seen carrying loads is when he acts as a carrier for a touring official. It is actually recorded that at one time he used to send his women for this work; but he has long given this up, possibly through experience of the less pleasant ways of subordinate State servants. Young hill girls and women carry heavy baskets or leaf-boxes of grain, logs of wood, water-pots or other weights on their heads, generally supporting the burden with their left hands holding its upper edge above their heads. With 439 loads of grain for sale, and perhaps piles of baskets, brooms or mats, 484 the Hill Maria housewife will go once a month to the bazaar, often from thirty-five to forty miles away, in the plains, while her menfolk [462] take nothing but bow and arrow or, very occasionally, big baskets made for storing grain, which only males may make. From Kumer, for example, on the Kutru-Antagarh border where the hill-streams begin to flow south to the Indrawati, they go thirty-nine miles to the market at Dhaurai, between Narainpur and Chhota

PLATE V



142
291
301
516

A HILL MARIA, OF THE GOND TYPE
Usendi Muka of Orcha



GROUP OF HILL MARIA GIRLS
(Photograph by Mr. K. L. B. Hamilton, C.I.E., I.C.S.)

[facing p. 62]

439 Dongar, sleeping the first night at Orcha, twenty-five miles from
Kurmer, descending in the morning fourteen miles to Dhaurai,
484 doing their selling and buying and eating a noon meal, and then
return that afternoon to sleep again at Orcha, reaching Kurmer on
the third day by noon. And their route is no easy one, but up hill
[482] and down dale along rough mountain paths. The men will carry
heavy loads balanced at either end of a carrying stick borne on
their shoulder, proceeding at a jog trot, for nine or ten miles over
similar paths, but stop to drink and paddle at the streams, and get
very exhausted if they have to carry weights much farther; on
the other hand, after food and an hour's rest they are ready to
walk back at once to their villages. Three Hill Marias on my last
481 visit to the hills came to my camp at Itulnar some seventy miles
across country, with letters, and met me on the march at 8 a.m.
in the hills on the third morning after they had set out, having done
twelve miles that morning along an exceptionally arduous mountain
241 path. When the crops are ripe on the *penda* slopes and the men
are sleeping there, the women go twice a day to them with their
food, and sometimes have a heavy day's reaping as well; the *penda*
may be five or six miles away from the village and high above it.

Like the Nagas of the Assam hills, the Hill Marias prefer
481 walking over hilly country to long treks on the plains, and are
excellent hill and tree climbers. All the Koitor of Bastar, in fact,
are remarkably agile tree climbers, and seem to walk up trees rather
than climb.

The Bison-horn Maria is even better developed physically than
147 the Hill Maria, and has similar powers of endurance, though on
536 the level plateau villages he does not become the adept hill climber
that every Hill Maria is. He leaves less, however, to his women.
He can be seen at his physical fittest when dancing for hours with
tireless verve and agility, wearing on his head a heavy head-dress
of bison-horns with plumes of peacock and jungle-cock feathers and
strings of cowries, with a heavy cylindrical drum of hollowed
tree-trunk three feet or more long slung from his shoulders, and
sometimes carrying a small son frogwise on his chest. He will carry
482 stick-loads of grain sixty or seventy miles to market in the Godavari
492 valley, for even he makes as yet only little use of carts or beasts
of burden; the Hill Maria makes none at all.

The Hill Maria wears nothing but a loin-cloth of coarse cotton
291 in winter, summer and rains, though an occasional man may have
147 a piece of similar cloth big enough to wrap over his shoulders at
night, and a few headmen have blankets. His body, therefore, is
inured to heat and to great cold; for frosts are frequent in his hills,
[132] and even as late as the end of March the thermometer may fall to
42°.

000 42°. But he feels the cold, and at night, when walking, may be met
513 carrying a glowing ember held close to his navel for warmth, while
374 in camp he sleeps on the ground between two fires, and in house,
field-hut or village dormitory sleeps generally on a platform of
criss-crossed bamboos or creeper rope with a fire beneath it. He
513 has usually also a sleeping mat or *masni* (Halbi) made of a special
grass, which is easily rolled up and carried about when he visits
Jagdalpur or a touring officer's camp; or he may use instead of it
his *taghali* or bark rain coat. He sleeps generally on his side with
his head resting on his arm, the other arm resting
on the ground in front with the elbow bent; and he
will shift from side to side. It is *polo*, that is taboo,
for a woman to sleep on a cot or platform, and she must sleep on
the ground in her room in the house.

Bodily attitudes

The Bison-horn Maria has generally a cot to sleep on, and even his wife often has one. In such matters he is getting more and more like the ordinary Hindu villager.

516 For eating or social conversation or resting, the Hill Maria
often sits with his buttocks on the ground and his knees drawn up,
though he sometimes uses the familiar Indian squatting position,
and his women usually squat in this way for mourning at funerals
or singing at weddings. The men have also little wooden stools to
[352] sit on, or sit on a stone, as at the commensal feasts; while in the
villages where there is the custom of the *gaita* or headman and the
kasyeq-gaita or Village Mother priest sitting on an *uddamgarya* or
seat of honour to preside over meetings of the elders, it is often
a flat stone resting on stone legs, on which he sits in ordinary sitting
posture. In any group of Hill Marias resting after a meal or on
a march you will see almost every attitude that might be adopted
by English schoolboys except lying prone on back or stomach. If
standing, a favourite position of all the tribes in Bastar is to stand
on one foot, the other knee being bent so that the sole of the foot
may rest against the outer side of the standing leg, the arm on the
same side as the bent knee catching hold of a bough or something
for steadiness. Another favourite position is to stand with the left
leg braced, the right slightly flexed so that the left hip is extended
sideways; the left wrist or knuckles rest on this hip, while the right
hand rests on the left shoulder, the right arm being bent at the
elbow to look like a V over the chest; or else the right arm is hung
loosely at the side, or held in that of the next youth. For fire-
[372] making, they kneel on their knees. They stand to urinate and
squat to defecate.

The Bison-horn Maria uses mostly the same positions, but is
[514] more prone to imitate Hindu habits; he squats to urinate.^

x[See cat.116, p. 418. – Analyst]

Cleanliness

It is generally asserted that all Marias are dirty, and object to washing. It is true that Maria women dancing late at night after lying on ground covered with the ashes of camp-fires, or men and women in the *penda* fields or after a long march, are dirty; and anyone who has tried to dress a Maria's wounds knows how dirt-encrusted they can be. Sleeping between fires, or over fires in an enclosed and low-roofed hut, does not promote cleanliness. But the real reason for the idea is the fact that the Hill Maria seldom washes his loin-cloth. On this, Russell and Hiralal say (III, p. 124):— 515

> 'In Bastar they seldom wash their clothes, as they think this impious, or else that the cloth would wear out too quickly if it were often washed. Here they set great store by their piece of cloth, and a woman will take it off before she cleans up her house, and do her work naked. It is probable that these wild Gonds, who could not weave, regarded the cloth as something miraculous and sacred, and, as already seen, the god Palo is a piece of cloth.'

This passage is all wrong. Palo is unknown to Maria or Muria Murias and Bison-horn Marias wash their clothes, and there are occasions when even a Hill Maria is bound to do so. He may not weave, himself, but he makes nets and baskets and twine, and always accepts the manufacturing processes of Kumhar potters, Kammar blacksmiths, Gharwa brass founders or Mahra weavers in a commonsense, rational way; he sees the work done quite often, and indeed there are many Marias who, in jail for homicide, have themselves become expert weavers of cloth or carpets. The reasoning processes of the savage are not unlike our own, and it is always safe to reject any such explanation as that he does not wash his cloth because he regards it as impious to wash something so sacred and miraculous, when there is available the commonsense economic explanation that he himself gives, that cloth costs money, of which he has never much, and that the oftener it is washed the sooner it wears out. So ordinarily, when a Hill Maria has his dip in a pool or river he takes off his filthy and inadequate loin-cloth and hangs it on a bush or rock while he washes his limbs, fastening it again all dirty on his clean body when he emerges. The women remove their loin-cloth, but not their *mudang*[1] and the cloth attached to it. Both husband and wife, however, must bathe in the morning after sexual intercourse and wash their loin-cloths; and a woman must invariably bathe and wash her loin-cloth, beating it out well on a stone, on leaving the menstruation hut or room at the end of her courses and of the four weeks following the birth of a child. Generally men and women wash or bathe every morning, and more often than not in the evening also. There are separate pools in [285 286] [833] [841 846]

---

[1] The *mudang* is explained below, under dress.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

515 the streams for the sexes, and they never bathe together. But the Hill Maria does not know the use of soap; occasionally his women follow the practice of the plains women and scour their hair with a plaster of black earth well rinsed out later. His nails are generally long and very dirty. The infant and the toddler are occasionally washed with water from a gourd. Where there is no stream near or water is scarce, the daily ablutions are often [415] performed with water dipped from an earthen water-pot with a gourd ladle, called *paghas* by the Hill Marias and *orka* in the plains, made from a gourd shaped like a large European smoking pipe; the straight stem is hollow and holed at the end; the stem is held near the bowl between the chin and collar-bone or shoulder and water tilted down from the bowl on to the body by dropping the other shoulder, while the hands rub the limb thus wetted. Needless to say, ablutions thus performed are not very effective.

The Bison-horn Maria also on occasion 'washes' with the ladle, but generally is cleaner than the Hill Maria, and is beginning to buy cheap soap in the bazaars. He will wash his hands before a meal, unlike the hill man. He has his daily dip, but generally in the evening only; and the women definitely bathe only in the evening on their way back from the fields. Both bathe naked, but they wash their clothes far more readily than the Hill Maria, living indeed in the 'bazaar' plains with several Mahra weavers in their midst.[a]

514 515 The Hill Maria, unlike the Hindu, does not wash after defecation, but wipes himself with leaves. The plainsman is learning the Hindu habit. Neither a Hill nor a Bison-horn village is ever as noisome as the average Hindu village of so 'advanced' a tract as the Maratha country of Nagpur or Berar, where at night the village streets are used as a public latrine and it is difficult to pass clean-shod in the morning. The Hill Maria generally retires into the jungle to ease himself, and the Bison-horn either does the same or uses the *bari* or vegetable garden at the back of his house.

356 361 A Hill Maria's house is really clean only for the first month or two after it is made, and there is no regular re-plastering of the floors with cow-dung and mud. The interior is rapidly grimed with smoke and dust; and if the Maria has any article he wishes to keep clean he stores it up a tree or in his granary. But his house seldom has to last him more than four or five years, after which, his *penda* slope being exhausted, he and the other villagers move their houses to one of the alternative village sites, and his old house is ultimately burnt, either deliberately or as a matter of course in the annual firing of the forest grasses. The Bison-horn Maria, on the other hand, is now a dweller in permanent habitations, save for an occasional shift for superstitious reasons. His houses are therefore

[a] [see cat. 116, pp. 418-419. — Analyst]

larger and higher, generally with a separate cooking hut; and he is 356
learning the Hindu habit of periodic re-plastering of the floors 361
with cow-dung.

Hair-dressing

It was observed above that a Hill Maria's head with a round 302
patch of hair on the crown drawn back into a top-knot and the rest shaved, but often stubbly or only less long than the crown patch, resembles in appearance a hill-crest with a clearing all around for *penda* cultivation and a grove of trees left standing on the summit. This is the old style of coiffure for men in the Abujhmar mountains, but the younger men incline to imitate Muria or Bison-horn Maria fashions. There are no recognized barbers among them; every man keeps his own razor and
shaves his friends, who return the compliment. The razor blade [413
is made by the nearest blacksmith from locally collected ore, and
is shaped like a little single-edged *dao*, the edge being convexly 326]
curved, and the blade fitted into a small cylindrical wooden handle by a pointed tang heated and then worked into the round end of the handle; the greatest length of the blade varies from 7 to 8·5 cm., the greatest breadth is about 2 cm., and the handle is generally about 6 to 6·5 cm. long. They are kept wrapped in a dirty rag to prevent rust, and tucked into the loin-cloth near the small of the back. The barber grasps his patient's crown-tuft in his left hand, tilts his head forward, pours water over the hair to be removed, and pushes the razor-blade downwards from the crown through the hair, stropping the blade at intervals on his own calves or thigh, and wiping off any hair adhering to it on the patient's head. He first shaves the back of the head and neck, measuring the length of the crown patch to be left unshaved by the length of the crown-tuft as it hangs down unknotted; he then shaves the sides behind the ears and above the cheeks, including side-whiskers if any, and ends with the front of the skull. He shaves efficiently and quickly. There is seldom need to trim beard or moustache. The old and middle-aged have their heads shaved only once or twice a year, if as often; but it is thought slack for a younger man not to do so every month. There are no religious or social occasions, such as births, weddings, funerals, or visits to the clan-god, when
shaving is obligatory. It is dangerous to leave your hair where [789
your enemy or some witch or wizard may get hold of it; so you
gather it, take it well into the jungle, hold it to your lips and puff 826]
it away, so depriving it of your personality or *jiwa* and making it useless for any magic.

Many of the younger men imitate the Bison-horn fashion of coiffure. A straight fringe or *willo* is left, varying from 4 cm. in length over the centre of the forehead to 2·5 cm. over the temples

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

302 and 5 cm. over the ears; this runs right round the head except just below the hair-knot. It is not the natural edge of the hair, as a little is shaved over the centre of the forehead and a good deal over the temples. From a parting (*paya*) just above this the hair is drawn back, like a European's hair brushed straight back from the forehead over the crown, into a top-knot knotted at the back of the head to hang down considerably lower than the Hill Maria crown-tuft knot. The knot is called *kupa-kelk*. The vernacular words used in describing this coiffure are from the Bison-horn dialect used around Aranpur. I have not seen Bison-horn Marias having their hair trimmed; but they say they use razors in the same way as the Hill Marias.

Women's hair is never cut. The hill women all part their hair in front in the centre and bring it back and down over their ears, the whole of which is left visible, into a great pendulous bunch at the back, like bobbed hair, but with the ends not trimmed off but apparently brought over some kind of stuffing and tucked under it. 301 302 They wear wooden combs made by the young men and often ornamented above the teeth with patterns worked with criss-cross strands of *kosa* silk. These are sometimes as high as Spanish combs, but never as broad. So, too, the man often wears a comb in his crown-tuft. The Bison-horn Maria women do their hair similarly, but frequently wear round the centre of the forehead and the back of the head a horizontal fillet of plain, thin, polished brass about 2 cm. wide, called *utari*, and over this a snood, almost a tiara, of brass, patterned in relief with hammered suns and moons, vertical and oblique hatching lines, saltires, etc., of which the broadest portion fits closely over the skull between the crown and the forehead, the tapering sides descending obliquely over the *utari*, passing behind the ears and ending in cusps which are linked together under the bun. This is called a *talutar*; it, too, is brightly polished. At its greatest width, where it passes over the top of the head, it is 9 or 10 cm. wide. Some women do not wear both *utari* and *talutar*, but either one or the other; the *talutar* can often be seen hung up on the veranda when the woman is busy in the fields; but in the warm spring and hot weather months when you meet bands of women gathering forest fruits, most of them are wearing their *talutar*.

Dress and ornaments: (a) Hill Maria

291 Before I visited the Abujhmar hills I was regaled with the tale told to Glasfurd in 1862 that many of the Hill Marias wore leaves, being too poor to buy any cloth. It was even then a fable; Glasfurd states that he made enquiries about this and was told by the Marias invariably that they had never seen or heard of any people so poor that they covered themselves with teak leaves; however poor they

might be, they could always obtain a small cloth. Of the men, 291
Glasfurd observed only that they were certainly more scantily clad than any he had hitherto seen; of the women, that their clothing, like that of the men, was scantier than that of other Maria women, consisting only 'of a very small cloth wrapped once round the loins', while 'some of the elder women and children wore only a square patch of cloth, suspended on a cord fastened round the waist, upon which bamboo rings were strung'.

The Hill Marias are now gradually learning to dress in the same fashion as the Jhorias and Murias of Antagarh or the Bison-horn Marias of Dantewara, and are wearing their loin-cloths, turbans and ornaments. But in the villages of the interior, and everywhere among the older inhabitants, the old fashions still survive. The loin-cloth is little more than a length of cloth a foot or fourteen inches broad, twisted or rolled so that it makes a strip round the waist about five inches wide or sometimes much less, passed between the legs tightly, so that in front it seems like a bag for the private parts and that behind it disappears between the buttocks, brought out and wound again round the waist, the end being passed through the waist fold and allowed to hang down over the right buttock; this end is called *toqa* (tail), and in the case of small boys reaches nearly to their ankles, getting shorter as the wearer ages. Above [301]
this there should be a girdle of cowry shells, worn so close to the loin-cloth as to be partly concealed by it; but cowries have become unobtainable, now that for forty years or more they have ceased to be currency, and the wearing of the cowry girdle is, as they admit, dying out, though old girdles are jealously preserved. Some wear just a cord instead of the girdle. Glasfurd says that in 1862 Marias sometimes wore, instead of the cowry girdle, a girdle of about ten or fifteen cords of the same form but smaller than those worn then by Gadba women, which he described thus :— a

> 'The girdle is somewhat singular; it is composed of forty to fifty separate cords of about eighteen or twenty inches in length, which are lashed at the ends; it is fastened in front. From the number and size of the cords, this girdle gives the wearer a strange appearance.'

I have not seen anything of this kind among the Hill or Bison-horn Marias of to-day. Sometimes cloth is so short that there is only a cord round the waist supporting a strip of cloth passing between the legs with a flap hanging down over the cord in front and behind. But generally now there is a tendency to widen the loin-cloth, and not to wear much of a *toqa*; it used to fulfil the useful purpose of [415]
a bag for receiving grain allotted for food at harvest and feasts, and indeed, the end of the loin-cloth is still so used. The Tokalor clan of Erpanar in Mangnar *pargana* is said to have obtained its

a [see cont. 116, p. 4n. - Analyst]

291 name because its founder and members, whenever grain was being given out, were found always to have extra long tail flaps (here pronounced *toka*) to their loin-cloths. A broader-woven cloth makes it possible for it to be taken once round the waist in its full unfolded width, so as to cover the buttocks and private parts. The *toga* hangs sometimes over the left buttock, and, in the south of the hills, sometimes in front of the body in the Godavari fashion.

[415] Tucked into the girdle or the loin-cloth are knives with or without wooden sheaths, razors (as already seen), hollow bamboo tubes filled with tobacco, or little tobacco boxes of carved wood or tree-seeds, or of basketry (the last kind is sometimes worn on the left shoulder on a cord passing round the neck and under the left arm-pit); a comb may hang over the buttock from a cord; and occasionally on the Dantewara side a larger knife approximating to the *banda* or dao used by the Bison-horn Marias and Parjas.

[301] The older Marias wear no cloth on their heads, and no ornaments in their hair. But it is general now to wear an apology for a *pagri* or turban consisting of one folded Mahra cloth wound round the forehead and tied at the back of the head. Youths wear between this and the back or side of their heads tail feathers of jungle-cock, hornbill or raquet-tailed drongo (which they stick into their crown-tuft knots if they have no *pagri*). This head-cloth is often dirty and worn, and looks suspiciously like all that is left of an old friend of a loin-cloth.

Men and women almost invariably go unshod; but occasionally a pair of very coarse sandals of untanned cowskin with a thong over the big toe and another over the four small toes is worn, generally only when there is a cut or a heel-crack to be protected from the ground.

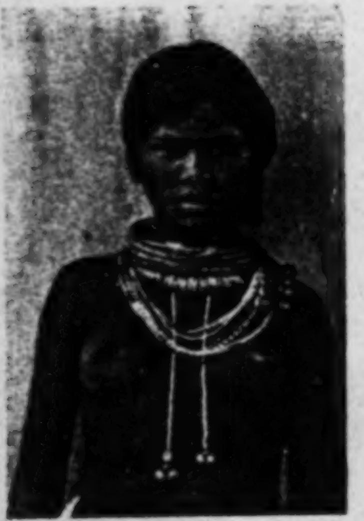
[164] Short of complete nakedness, man could hardly wear less than the Hill Maria in his most primitive state. His scanty frontal covering often leaves little to the imagination in its utter inadequacy. But it is to the fact that he wears so little that he owes it that he is far freer from scabies, itch and ringworm than the Bison-horn Maria, and the Murias and others of the plains, who more and more are imitating Hindu clothes, but are too poor to afford either much washing or spare suits. At the numerous State dispensaries these are the commonest complaints, and treatment is useless because the patients will not leave off the dirty, infected clothing. Luckily,

292 coat and 'waskat' are still rarities in the hills; Bardal Chamru of Kutul, the headman or *majhi* of Bardal *pargana*, and his brother Bardal Boranga, who used to accompany me when I toured near their villages, always arrived coated and waistcoated above their loin-cloths, but would discard the obnoxious and unnecessary

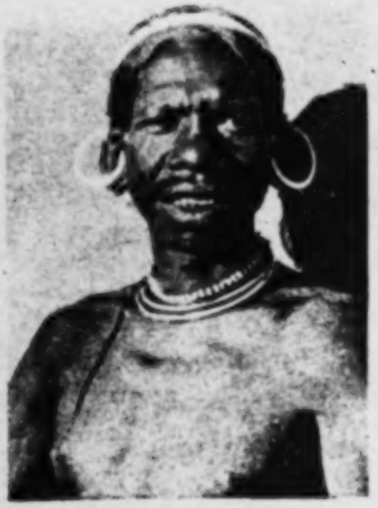
1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

PLATE VI

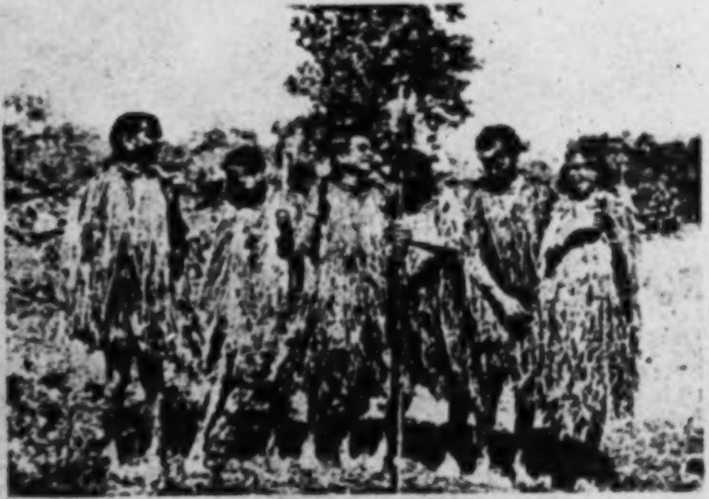
142
291
301
302



Full-face, Jugho Chero, of Itulnar



Hill Maria of Handawada
(Photograph by Baron E. von Eickstedt)



Kutru Mar youths, wearing *taghali* bark overcoats

[Facing p. 70]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

292 garments as soon as possible. In their youth they had been sent with a party of men and women as exhibits to the Allahabad Exhibition, where Boranga had celebrated his marriage *coram publico Indico*; they brought back with them from Allahabad a bigger suspicion of the *Kosor*, as they, like Gonds all over the Central Provinces, call all Hindus, a coat and waistcoat and blankets, and a taste for *kappu* or opium which luckily was not inherited by Baranga's son, the present headman, or any of the villagers.

291 As in Glasfurd's day, the women go with breasts uncovered. Very old women occasionally hobble about inside their huts completely naked. The square patch of cloth suspended between the legs from a waist-cord on which bamboo rings were strung, which Glasfurd saw as the sole garment of some children and elderly women, is the garment known as *mudang*, worn only by females. It is to-day definitely intimate underwear, to be seen by no one save the husband, except in the case of very little girls who, when six or so, wear it for the first time as their only garment. Brass rings made by the Ghasia (Gharwa) brass-workers in bazaar places in the plains such as Gidam, Dhaurai and Narainpur, have replaced the bamboo rings of Glasfurd's time. The cord on which they are strung is sometimes a thin piece of cane. A mother buys a few rings for her little girls whenever she has a pice or two to spare at her visits to the markets; and the cord becomes nearly full of rings when the girl is nubile. The *mudang* cord is never removed, even at child-birth. The cloth attached to it is usually a strip of old rag torn off a worn-out loin-cloth. It has already been stated that women keep it on when bathing. The *mudang* is buried or burned with the woman.

The cord full of rings is obvious under the top of every woman's loin-cloth, as a sort of ridge. The cloth itself is folded over the rings, and hangs down all round over the loins and buttocks, without being passed between the legs. It is therefore not revealing like the men's cloth. Occasionally women wear a small sheet thrown
[117] carelessly across the breasts and over the left shoulder in imitation of the custom gradually spreading in the Bison-horn country; and a cloth of this kind is used for supporting a baby, who rides on his
[854] mother's right or left hip with the cloth drawn tight over his little buttocks and up to his armpits and thence fastened over her other shoulder. Even for dancing a woman has no other clothes.

301 Glasfurd noted in 1862 that few of the Hill Marias possessed the beads that other Marias liked so much. The older men still wear little of this kind; a few have a single necklet

Ornaments

of dirty yellow beads made of small chopped sections of pea-fowl's lower leg-bone about 5 mm. in length. Occasionally

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

301 they have similar necklets of little sections of wood or of seeds.
The middle-aged and particularly the young have now made up
for any former lack of beads by going to the opposite extreme in
the profusion and variety of their ornaments. They have borrowed
[177] freely from the fashions of the Jhorias and Murias on the one side
and on the other from the Bison-horn Marias, but in an eclectic way,
and showing marked individual taste. They have no use for the
humming-top shaped greenish-yellow glass or the tubular scarlet
beads so popular with the Bison-horn Maria, nor for the small
speckled beads which Czecho-Slovakia is now sending to the bazaars
of the north; they like small primary coloured beads of the old
'hundreds and thousands' type, but large enough to be threaded
with ease, while their women still prefer the large, almost cylindrical
but rounded-edge pure white beads of uneven size that seventy
years ago were the fashion among the Marias of the plains. On the
whole the women have borrowed mostly from the Bison-horn
fashions, and the men from those of the north, particularly the
Jhorias. On their arms the men have tight-fitting armlets of brass
or 'jarman' (an aluminium alloy) just above their elbows, from
one to five in number. Round their necks they have up to six
collars of coloured beads sometimes six-deep, arranged according
to individual colour tastes, but generally in vertical bars of colour
with alternate bars of white. From large ear-rings 4 or 5 cm. in
[304] diameter worn in a slit-hole pierced in the cartilage just below the
helix and above the front upper insertion point of the auricle, hang
nearly to the shoulders tassels made of three or four strings of beads
threaded singly with a similar colour arrangement, ending with
little tufts of bright wool; and fillets of the same bead-work are
worn either loosely over the forehead and temples, or higher round
the crest of the head, or looped from ears to hair-tuft. The intricacy
and symmetry of the bright bead-work produces very pleasing
patterns; the 'girl friend' usually arranges the beads for the youth.
Older men more often wear small brass chains round the ears and
hair-tuft than bead fillets. The large ring already referred to is
first made in the form of a crescent blade of aluminium alloy, one
of the tapered ends being passed through the slit-hole in the cartilage
and hooked into the loop formed by bending the other tapered end
to form a little eyelet, the remaining metal being then whipped
spirally round the metal from which it tapered. Sometimes smaller
rings of the same type are made of brass, a blue or red glass bead
being threaded just inside the eyelet, and worn in a hole in the
304 tragus of the ear, or the antitragus. Innumerable holes are pierced
301 through the fold of the helix, in which are worn little rings of thin,
plain brass wire; there may even be a double row of these right

round the whole helix, giving a total of over forty for the ear, and 301
making it green with verdigris. These are called *maqqaweadang*. 304
The lobe is pierced and a plug of wood or a rolled leaf worn in it by those who cannot afford something more ornate or are old-fashioned; others fit on to the wooden plugs, by means of a hollow brass socket-stalk, brass circles about 15 mm. in diameter made by the Ghasias by *cire-perdue* process, ornamented with spiral whorls or concentric circles, or like little shields bossed at the centre. Some wear, instead of these, a ring of thick brass or even silver or gold, heavy and fitting closely around the end of the lobe. Lobe ear-rings or plug ornaments are generally called *porsheng*. The effect of these is greatly to distend the lobe. A few rings are worn on the 301
fingers, generally a treble spiral of brass, or a plain aluminium band; the Jhorias are fond of Ghasia-made rings with small brass pellet-bells, but few Hill Marias wear these rings, though many hill women wear strings of such bells round their necks; they also are made by *cire perdue*. It is amusing to see the Hill Maria women haggling with Ghasia women for these bells and other brass ornaments at Dhaurai bazaar. A comb or two, and perhaps a cheap Japanese mirror, stuck in his hair, complete the finery of a young Hill Maria.

The woman wears perhaps one or two bead collars, and sometimes seven or eight bead fillets, as well as bead tassels depending from the lobes of her ears, or from a smaller cartilage-ring of the type already described. She has also ear-plugs with small brass circular [304]
plate heads in her lobes, and sometimes little plugs in one or both of her nostrils. She, like the men, wears *maqqaweadang* wire rings in the helices of her ears. Round her neck she has ropes of the large white uneven beads already referred to, sometimes ending in a short single string of beads with one or two brass pellet-bells at the bottom. The ropes vary in length, the longest reaching her navel. Over these and the coloured bead collars she has large iron neck hoops or *sota* in Bison-horn Maria style, on which brass rings may be threaded of any number up to 100 or more. She is fond also of necklets of brass circles made by *cire perdue* with spiral whorls like the ear-plug caps; a few plain iron and aluminium hoops may complete her neckware. The beads hang between her breasts, but partially cover them when worn in profusion. On her wrists she has a number of loose bracelets of cylindrical aluminium and brass, and, when she dances, dancing anklets on both legs, arched over her ankle-bones. Her carved and ornamented combs at the top or side of her hair bun add to her finery. Needless to say, much of this ironmongery and brassware is left in the house when she is working in the fields, but she would not be without any of it when she sets off on her long treks to the markets in the plains. Seen

301 from behind, it makes her appear very thick-, in fact bull-necked, and creates a false impression of her often slender build.

304 What beauty the girls have they mar to Western eyes by excessive tattooing over all the face and forehead, and often the breasts also. Mothers begin to tattoo their daughters when they are eight or nine years old, using lengths of the brass wire used for the rings in the helix of the ear, sharpened into rough needles, and black charcoal powder. The girl lies on her side with one cheek flat on the ground while the mother operates on the other cheek. Sometimes only one breast is tattooed, often neither. They seem never to tattoo legs or arms, though Glasfurd speaks of their arms and thighs being covered with tattooing. A swastika with the corners slightly rounded and not right-angled, and a pair of very small parallel vertical lines between each arm is a common motive, on face and breast. On the centre of the forehead, vertically one below the other, are usually tattooed a circle with a dot in the centre, for the sun, a circle and a crescent for the full and crescent moon respectively. Thence fairly symmetrically vertical hatching alternates with horizontal round and round the face, becoming oblique at the corners and down the sides of the nose; and over the corners of the cheekbones three dots are made triangle-wise. This is only one common pattern. The only tattooing on men is single, double or treble horizontal rows of dots, varying in number from three to nine, over the glabella. I did not ascertain at what age or by whom these marks are made. There are no special tattoo marks for the different clans. There seems to be no significance behind tattooing; it is considered merely an adornment. The Nagpur Gonds speak of tattooing as marks by which ancestors and clan-gods can identify [775] persons in the next world; but the Marias have no formulated idea of another world.

292 The dancing dress of the Hill Maria men is completely different from that of the Bison-horn Marias and most other tribes. The 535 women have no special dancing dress. The young men wear on their heads either red and white turbans; or, more often, curious Chinese fig-box head-dresses which they call by the Hindi word *topi*, covered with red or blue cloth, and piped at the edges and centre with peacock feather quills. Often a peacock, jungle-cock, hornbill or raquet-tailed drongo's feather is stuck in the *topi*, or spiral coils of feather quill fastened on both sides of a stick; or scarlet 'Scissors' cigarette packets found empty at the bazaars, lead seals from petrol tins, old brass cog-wheels from watches, little tins, cheap mirrors, the round of bright tin-foil cut out when an airtight cigarette tin is opened; dried snipe or woodcock neck and skull; or anything bright-coloured or interesting to the Maria.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

PLATE VII

292
535
301

Hill Maria dancers. Note, in 2, the use of bark rain-coat as dancing skirt
(*Photographs by Mr. K. L. B. Hamilton, C.I.E., I.C.S.*)

Hill Maria dancers, showing dancing-shields and bunches of pellet-bells worn over the rump

A Hill Maria of Kurmer, using his rain-hat and rain-shield, as he works with his *gudari* digging hoe

[facing p. 74]

[*See p.* 74

292 Sometimes the 'fig-box' is made of a lattice of split bamboo strips.
Generally a streamer or two of red or blue cloth hangs down from
535 the back of the *topi* or turban. Over the chest a sort of sleeveless vest of red cloth is worn, almost neck-high, and over this from breast to waist, strands of white cloth are twisted, back and front, so as to produce a rib-like effect, the ribs radiating from a central double plait of cloth running vertically from navel to breast, then passing on either side of the neck and repeating the pattern in the rear. The 'ribs' vary from five to nine in number, according to the means or taste of the dancer. This cloth arrangement is known as *gatikarhana*. Below is worn a long skirt of red-edged white or dark blue cotton, called a *kochi*, with a white or coloured sash round the waist over the bottom of the 'ribs' and the top of the skirt; the sash is called *poriya*. Over the sash round the waist runs a cord, from which is suspended over the rump a great bunch of large and small pellet-bells (*muyang*), in the middle of which two or three large clapper-bells often are prominent. From the neck is hung over the back of the shoulders a basketry dancing-shield or *moghi*, made to slant downwards away from the back by two hoops of bamboo protruding underneath. Over the top of the shield either streamers of coloured cloth reaching nearly to the ground, or peacock's tails
292 are looped. The shield is made of two targes of twined basketry
joined together so that the rough edges are in the middle; the
535 warps are flat slices of bamboo about 13 mm. wide, radiating from
285 the centre of the targes, and the wefts, the twining of which begins from the centre, are for the most part thin rods of bamboo pared to the thickness of a straw; but at intervals bands of red are made on the targes by using red yarn from the markets as wefts for three or four rounds of twining; flakes of shining mica are worked into this yarn, and over the outermost red band often cowry shells are sewn. The ends of the bamboo hoops are forced through the joined targes and held either by horizontal pieces of bamboo tied across them, or by ornamental studs of *cire-perdue* brass-work. When not
292 in use, the dancing-shield is never kept inside the house, but either
535 sewn up in leaves and hung high in the boughs of a tree, or on the outer wall of the *manda* or granary under the eaves; this is to protect it from smoke, sun and rain. Each dancer makes his own dancing head-dress and shield. Formerly every dancer held in his left hand the handle of an axe, of which the head, decked with coloured cloth streamers, protruded behind his back; and the axe was a *pharsi* with blade shaped like vulture wings. Now even the ordinary Maria workaday axe is ceasing to be used, a twisted tree-root, or plume of peacock feathers with the stalks plaited together in a basketry pattern, or a stick, taking its place.

This dress was in regular use in every village in Metabhum
292 until a year or two ago. At my last visit in March 1934, I was
535 amazed to find that, almost as in obedience to some decree that had
gone forth, the youth of the hills had abandoned the rib-dress, the
178 shield and the gaily-coloured head-dress and skirt, sometimes
wearing in lieu cheap bazaar singlets and a *dhoti*, retaining, however,
the buttock-bells, the songs and the dance-steps. The older men
all said that it was a spontaneous decision of the younger generation,
decided upon because of the cost of buying the expensive yards of
cloth needed for the dress; but this would not account for the
abandonment of the shield, which they make themselves, and for
which peacock tails are better than cloth streamers. Many have
actually thrown away their cloth and shields. But some still think
it necessary to hang them up round fresh graves, and I found that
all the youths still know how to make them, and were willing to
make them in camp. In 1932 a rumour went through all the tribes
203 of Jeypore and spread thence into Bastar that a god had descended
184 on one of the mountains of the Eastern Ghats and commanded all
men to give up keeping black poultry and goats, wearing clothes or
178 using umbrellas or blankets with any black in them, and using
beads or articles made of aluminium alloy. The message was
rapidly bruited abroad, and everywhere villages had '*bohorani*'
ceremonies for purifying themselves from disease, and cast out
black goats, cocks, hens, umbrellas, blankets, 'waskats', beads,
aluminium ornaments and domestic utensils on the village
boundary. Mohammedans began to make a good thing out of
slaughtering the goats or exporting them. Strenuous propaganda
by the State soon stopped this impoverishing rumour,
and some of the villagers in the end recovered much of their
property from the police, who had been ordered to take charge
of it. At the time, the Bison-horn Marias seemed to have
been only a little affected and the Hill Marias not at all;
possibly this sudden abandonment of the most picturesque
features of their dancing costume may be a late repercussion.
Such sudden moves amongst Indian primitive tribes are not
uncommon; the Gonds of Nagpur and adjacent districts a few years
ago suddenly decided to give up keeping poultry and pigs as a
measure of social uplift.

Rain-clothes

The *taghali* or bark cloak used by the Hill Maria for warmth
292 or, primarily, protection against heavy dew and rain, has already
been mentioned as deputizing occasionally for the
sleeping-mat. Hutton speaks of the Angami Nagas
making 'a large hat of leaves and basket work . . . as well as
a rain-coat of plaited grass, the ends of which hang out loose, to

292 [824] keep off the water'.[1] The Maria cloak is made from long, thin strips of the bark of the *wara marra* (*Kydia calycina*); when this bark has been well retted in a stream it is pounded, and the long strips peel off like blades of a broad dry grass. They are gathered round the neck into a close plaited yoke over twine strings used for tying it in front, under the chin, and the ends hang loose. It is known as *tarali* to the Bison-horn Marias, some of the remoter of whom also use it. Besides these, the Hill Maria has a large hat of a very flat conical shape, like the Annamese headgear, made of leaves on a bamboo framework, called *reking* (it is almost an umbrella, with the head used as the stick, rather than a hat), and a similar leaf waterproof shield called *deda'ino* for his back and shoulders, in shape like an elongated winnowing fan, or an English dustpan, the enclosed end resting on his shoulders. Similar rain-hats and shields are worn by Gonds and others in various parts of the Central Provinces, though the Maria shapes are distinctive.

Dress and ornaments: (b) Bison-horn Maria

291 The account in paragraph 87 of Glasfurd's report obviously refers more to the Marias living 'in the wilder and more unfrequented parts, such as among the valleys of the Baila Deelas and towards the Indrawutty and Kootroo Talook' than to the Bison-horn Marias of the Jagdalpur and Dantewara plateaux; the description which follows the words quoted applies far more to the Hill Maria styles of dress and ornamentation than to those in vogue among the Bison-horn Marias either now, or when the *Gazetteer* was prepared in 1907-9, or at the time of certain earlier photographs taken at the end of the nineties when Colonel Fagan was administering the State. Even so far as Glasfurd's remarks apply to Kutru and the Indrawati valley, they strengthen the contention already advanced in this book of the steady spread of Bison-horn culture among villages in the valley once Hill Maria in culture. He notes, however, that towards Bhopalpatnam and Bijapur the Bison-horn Marias are better clad, but gives no details.

Their loin-cloth is more ample than that worn in the Abujhmar, and, except when girded up for hunting or work in jungle and field, completely covers their buttocks. It is gathered up into a knot just below the navel, and usually a fold is left, varying in length, to hang down over the piece that has, as with the Hill Marias, been passed tightly over their private parts and between their legs. There is no *toqa* or tail behind, consequently, as in the Abujhmar. Towards the Godavari valley the front flap gets very long. The Bison-horn Maria of to-day often wears a mill-made singlet of cotton mesh or gauze, or a '*washat*', and a coat of some cheap

---

[1] J. H. Hutton, *The Angami Nagas*, p. 26.

291 cotton material cut in European style; or instead of these has at least an extra round or two of his loin-cloth which he can throw loosely over his shoulder, or a small cotton sheet to answer the same purpose.

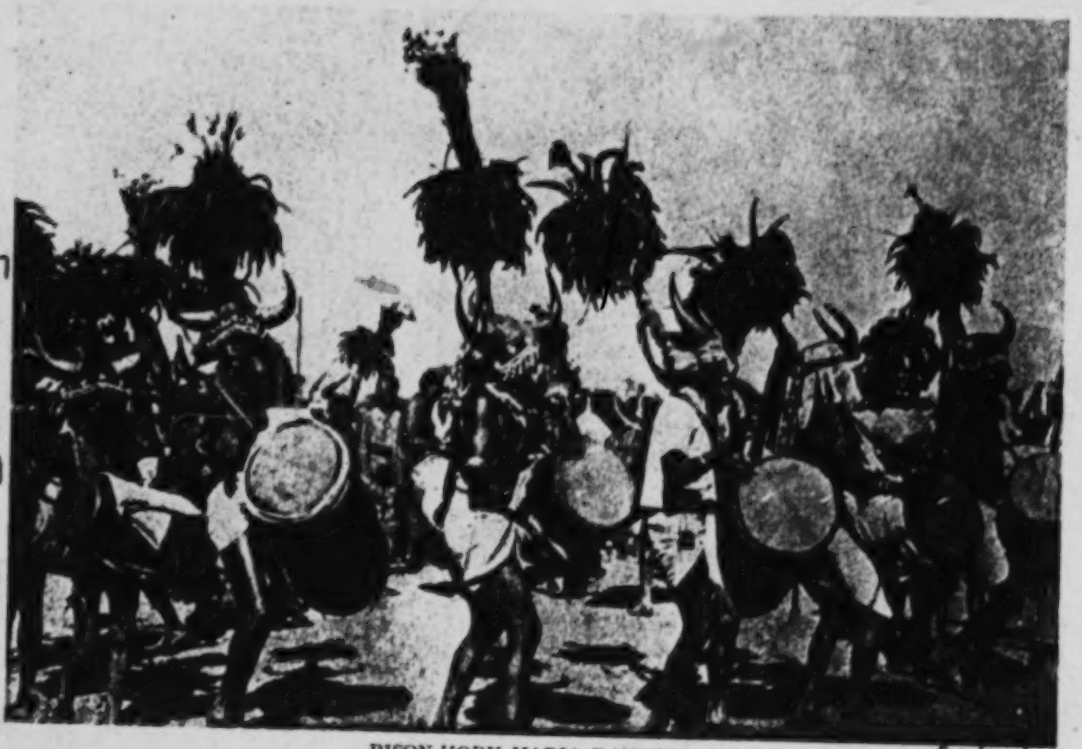
The women's loin-cloth is worn like that of their men, but in front is not knotted in such a way as to make a long flap necessary to cover the front of their thighs; it looks, therefore, like a short skirt from their waists to just above their knees. In the fields and jungles and in their own homes they still go with their breasts uncovered save for their masses of ornaments; but they have become somewhat self-conscious, owing to misguided officials suggesting that it was improper for them to appear like this before their Chief or at high officials' camps; and they frequently, when going to a bazaar or festival, or to dance at a wedding or camp, start off with their breasts loosely covered with a cotton sheet or one or two folds of their loin-cloth wrapped loosely from one hip over the opposite shoulder, their beads and finery resting on top of this cloth. Generally, however, the cloth is too small or too loosely thrown over the body really to conceal the breasts. They [538] have this favourite riddle :—

'*Bara patte lote keren konda podo*',

meaning, 'What is the pair of bullocks that cannot be confined within the byre of the twelve parts of the body?' to which the answer is '*Dūdo*', or 'Woman's breasts'. They explained this as referring to the refusal of the breasts to be concealed by any wrap. Moreover, as soon as women warm to the dance they rapidly divest themselves of the unwonted wrap.

Most men now wear a *pagri* or turban, tied in the usual fashion of the Hindu population of the adjacent Chhattisgarh districts, and far more ample than the rag worn by the Hill Marias. They do not adorn it with feathers; nor do they wear bead chains or 301 fillets on their heads like the Hill Marias. They use far fewer ornaments; they do not wear the brass wire *mappasadang* rings in 304 the helix of the ear, but sometimes a single small ring like the tasselled ring of the Hill Marias, but worn in a hole in the cartilage near the darwinian tubercle, from which a small gilt chain depends. In the lobe a small ear plug of gold or gilded brass, often with a little red or green stone or glass set in it, may anchor two or three gilt chains fastened at the top to a similar plug vertically above it in 301 the helix. Most men content themselves with one or two small bead necklaces (*mangya*) round their necks, the beads being all of one shape, scarlet or royal blue tubular glass, or pale green humming-top-shaped, both kinds considerably larger than the Hill Marias'

PLATE VIII



BISON-HORN MARIA DANCERS

[Facing p. 78]

534
535
292

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

301 favourite beads. They are fond also of necklaces of small, brightly
gilded beads, which they call *mirako-mungya*. They may wear
one or two armlets (*danda-bhata*) on one arm above the elbow, or
a pair of bracelets on one wrist (*ka'i-bara*), of silver, brass, or
aluminium, and similar in type to those bought by the Hill Marias.
They wear a plain waist-cord (*para-nori*) instead of the cowry-cord
of the hills for carrying knives and tobacco boxes. A comb is
attached to this, for regular use. They may have hanging from
a fastener of aluminium wire, shaped like the eye of the hooks-and-
eyes of ladies' dresses, two thin aluminium toothpicks, and an
aluminium ear-scoop; the Hill Marias also use these. They hang
like a pendant on the chest.

The women's hair ornaments have been described along with
their hair-dressing; it need only be added here that occasionally,
instead of the polished brass fillet there mentioned, they wear
bead fillets like those of the Hill Maria women. Armlets and
wristlets are worn on the same arm, and are similar to those of the
hill women. Instead of the white-bead ropes and the coloured-bead
collars worn by the hill women, they wear long ropes of red, red and
green, or gamboge beads; and over these they wear a vast number
of the iron and brass rings of the type already described as borrowed
by the hill women from them; they here call the iron neck-rings
tiya, not *suta* as in the hills. Their ear plugs are similar to those
301 used in the hills, but from the lobe plug to a ring worn, as by their
304 men, in a hole in the cartilage near the darwinian tubercle, is often
fastened a cord on which is threaded between two blue or green
beads a slightly oblong, cube-shaped bead of brass or aluminium.
The nose is symmetrically adorned by two gold or gilt rings in the
wing of each nostril, and, between them, hanging from a small ring
in the septum, a small gold or gilt ornament like a leaf pointing
downwards, sometimes with a piece of red glass set in the middle.

292 I have taken the wearing of the Bison-horn dancing head-dress
as the most obvious distinction between the two kinds of 'Marias'.
535
Dancing-dress
This is known as a *tallagulla*. I had one made from
horns and peacock feathers supplied by me. After
my head had been measured round the plane of the temples, a
basketry 'cap' was made, fitting loosely round the brows, and
sloping backwards and upwards into a low peak. It is made loose,
294 as it has to support the horns and the plume of feathers, as well as
strings of cowries and many folds and streamers of cloth of various
colours, which subsequently tighten it and make it fit snugly round
the head. The basketry is of twilled bamboo strips running
diagonally from the edge that fits over the brows. The bison-horns
were pared with a sharp knife to remove outer dirt or callosities and

294 reveal their true colour and beauty; they were then rubbed smooth with sand and polished with mustard oil. The edges of the horns where they had originally sprung on their cores from the bison's head were cut down and trimmed clean and straight, so that they would fit closely on to the sides of the basketry cap, a little to the front of and above the ears. Holes were bored at regular intervals about an inch from the rim of the horns with a piece of heated brass wire, and widened with the point of a knife used as a drill by rolling the wooden handle between the palms of the hands. Palm [283] fibre twine[1] was stitched through these holes and the basketry, the end of the twine being then whipped three or four times round the end of the horn, passed through the basketry again and knotted inside the cap to the other end. Meanwhile the peacock's tail-feathers had had all their lower feathering trimmed off and had been gathered into a tight round bunch of the eyed ends, all round and below which were added great numbers of the tail-feathers of the red jungle-cock or his domesticated cousin. The stalks were then plaited together with horizontal twilled wefts of thin slices of green bamboo rind, the ends being cut flush, and bound round twice with bamboo rind. The plume so made was fastened vertically to the peak of the basketry cap by a bamboo rod passing through the peak and running into the bunched feather stems, and by stitches of twine. The further adornment of the *tallagulla* depends largely on means and taste. The stem of the plume of feathers is wound round with coloured cloth, the ends of which hang as streamers down to the centre of the back. *Pagri* cloth of bright colours is criss-crossed tightly over the basketry cap and the brow ends of the horns, and often ends of this are left as streamers behind the head. Ideally, a brow piece of red or blue cloth, with a fringe, single or double, of closely-stitched cowries along its lower edge, and from five to ten tassels of strings of cowries hanging from it over the face, is tied over the lower rim of the head-dress; the brow piece is often further adorned in the centre or edges with flakes of mica, or groups of cowries, or brass studs, or a pattern of small pieces of cloth of contrasting colours. New cowries being unobtainable, often this brow-piece is replaced by extra folds of *pagri* cloth.^

136 Bison must in the old days have been very plentiful; this was, indeed, recorded as the case by Glasfurd in 1862, but his son Colonel A. I. R. Glasfurd, in the fascinating chapter on a shoot in Bastar in his *Musings of an Old Shikari*,[2] states that he took his father's old diaries with him to Bastar and found no game at all in

---

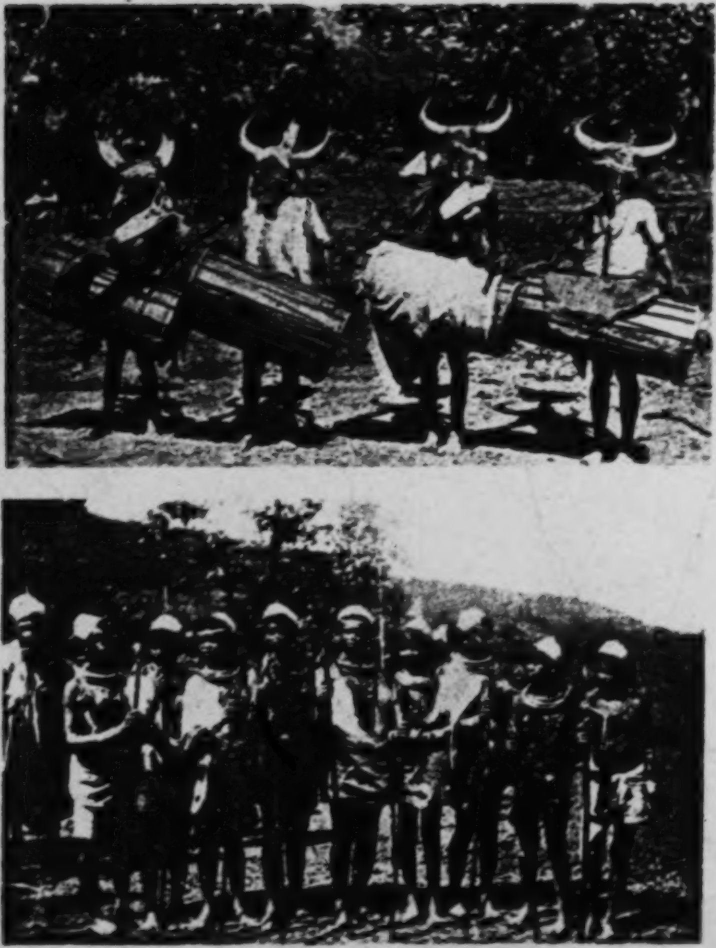
[1] 'Twine' is used in its technical sense.

[2] pp. 127-48 (London, The Bodley Head, 1928).

^ [see cat. 116, p. 48. – Analyst]

PLATE IX

535
534
292
301



BISON-HORN MARIA DANCERS AT BAILADILA

Above Four men. (*Photograph by Mr. K. L. B. Hamilton, C.I.E., I.C.S.*)

Below Women. Note the clothes, the masses of ornaments, and the *tirdudi* bamboo dancing-staves

[Facing p. 80]

136 many of the places where game of all kinds was plentiful in his father's time. Every Maria has his bow and arrow, the population has multiplied, and miles of jungle have been beaten annually for game in the great spring hunts. [224] Wild buffalo and bison had been so reduced in numbers that they were declared protected thirty years ago, and heavy fines have been imposed for shooting them. 535 The supply of bison-horns is thus not equal to the demand, and the head-dress is therefore a highly prized hereditary possession. 292 No one should try to buy them from their owners; if a specimen is needed, the collector should provide the horns and other materials and see it made up for him.^ Bison-horns being now rare, and obtainable only from a bison found dead or by purchase from the State Forest Department, various substitutes are being used, such as domestic bullocks' or small buffaloes' horns, wild boars' tushes, the long beaks of the hornbill, and, occasionally, the antlers of the [326] spotted deer (*Cervus axis*). The most interesting substitutes are brass patterned horns, of the shape and size of bison-horns, made by the *cire-perdue* process by the local Gharwa (Ghasia) brass workers.

Except occasional dancing anklets of hollow iron with pebbles inside, the Bison-horn Maria wears no special dancing dress; in fact he girds up his loin-cloth higher than usual and generally discards his singlet or '*washat*', so as to leave himself as free as possible for his antics, while the heavy drum that he carries slung from his right shoulder across his abdomen necessitates as much freedom as possible.

The women wear no special dancing dress, but put on every available ornament, and carry in their right hands *tirdudi* or bamboo staves to which are fastened bunches of iron pellet-bells, shaped something like short but plump pea-pods, which they clash in time with the drums as they dance by striking their butts on the ground. Similar bells sometimes adorn the drum-stick with which the left hand of the male dancer beats the cowskin membrane at the left end of his drum.

Weapons and tools

411 The universal *vade mecum* of the Hill Marias is the knife or *kasyeq* carried tucked into the loin-cloth, with or without a wooden sheath. Of this, as of all weapons and tools used by Hill or Bison-horn Marias, it has to be remembered that they are not always made by blacksmiths working exclusively for Marias, but often by blacksmiths in or near the bazaar villages of the plains who cater for Murias, Halbas and other tribes also. 411 The most distinctive types are possibly, in the case of the Hill Marias, those made by the few blacksmiths living 326 in their hills; but there are only slight differences, often of mere

^[see cat. 116, p. 419]

411 size, from those used in the plains. The plains blacksmith does
recognize the Hill Maria's individual taste in such matters, but that
326 taste is always being modified by the sight, occasional use and
occasional purchase of plains types, particularly if, when a new
weapon is wanted in a hurry, only the latter are immediately
available.

The blade of the average Maria knife measures 13 to 15 cm.
411 from the point to the beginning of the tang. It is about 2·5 cm.
broad where the tang begins, and from there the cutting edge curves
inwards for a quarter or a fifth of its length, thence tapering with
a slight convex curve to the point, which is 2 or 3 cm. to the side
of the axis of the handle. The reverse edge is about 3 mm. thick
in the tang, the thickness gradually diminishing towards the point.
The tang is a continuation of the thick side of the blade, about
8 mm. wide where it leaves the blade and tapering for about 3·5 or
4 cm. to a pointed end. Except where it is continued in this tang,
the blade has a horizontal bottom. The tang is heated and so
burned into the wooden handle; the blacksmith, with this as all
iron tools and weapons, supplies only the iron, and the buyer makes
his own handle. The edge is produced in the first place by hammering
on each side, followed by rubbing down a whet-stone. Being
made of soft iron smelted from local ore, these knives can be given
an extremely sharp point and fine edge. They are not usually
[442] taken back to the smith to be sharpened, but are whetted on a
stone; there is often a flat, black, polished, communal whet-stone
outside the men's dormitory (*gotul*) in a hill village.

Besides fitting the tang into a short, cylindrical, wooden handle,
411 about 6·5 to 7·5 cm. long, and in diameter 2 cm. at the base and
322 somewhat thinner where the tang enters it, the Hill Maria makes
a wooden sheath of two flat pieces of wood trimmed roughly to the
shape of the blade, each of which has on one side a low flange
slightly more than half as thick as the thick edge of the blade.
The two flat pieces are laid on each other, the flanged edges together,
and are joined by whipping of twine, *kosa* silk or millimetre-wide
thin thongs of hide at the broad top, over a groove round the centre
of the sheath, and near its point. The sheath is often carved,
[531] favourite designs being rough lozenges in relief on a bar, or a bar
indented, or bands of three parallel lines.

411 This knife the Maria uses for slicing bamboo and all ordinary
cutting purposes; holding the handle loosely in his hand he uses
its full weight for chopping with the concave portion of the blade
pieces of wood up to 3 cm. in diameter, getting a surprisingly
straight cross-section; he usually chops all round the circumference
to a depth of a third of the diameter, then breaks off the portion to

be severed, trimming the break with the knife held and used in the 411
normal cutting position; he carves patterns in relief with the sharp
point, or, holding the knife vertically, rolls the handle between the
flat palms of his hand so as to drill holes with the point, trimming
the edges of the holes with a burning ember.

The Bison-horn Maria uses a similar knife, often much larger,
and seldom with a sheath. His *banda* is like a dao, but it is really
a glorified and enlarged knife, with a thick end, and sometimes
a pronounced bend or angle in the centre of the cutting edge;
he uses this for lopping thick saplings or bamboo culms. But the
use of the *banda* is not universal, and may be borrowed from Parjas [177]
or other tribes to the east. Similar weapons, but socketed on to
long shafts of bamboo, and known as *gagra*, are used by the northern
Murias and Jhorias, occasionally by Hill Marias, as weapons of
offence and defence or billhooks for bamboo and saplings; the
ordinary *gagra* has a concavely curved edge and a point, the *chhuri
gagra* a convex edge and no point, while the *bhalu gagra* has an edge
curving concavely from the top to a bend about half way along its
length, and thence concavely to the socket.

The Hill Maria calls his axe *maq'su*, which is the hill gutturalized 412
version of the ordinary Gondi word *maras* used all over the Central
Provinces. The Bison-horn Maria uses a totally different word for
his axe of this shape, *godel*. The Halbi word is *tangya*. Like the
Naga axe, the *maq'su* or *godel* 'is an iron blade, decidedly suggestive
of a long stone celt in form '[1]; but unlike that axe, the butt of the
blade ends in a socket for the haft, not in a tang inserted in a hole
in the haft. The cutting edge of the blade among the Hill Marias
seldom exceeds 7 cm. width, and 15 cm. is the maximum length of
the blade from the cutting edge to the socket, which encloses a haft
4 or 5 cm. in diameter. It has a pronounced 'waist' just before
the socket, but this is far more marked on the longer Muria *maras*
than on *maq'su* or *godel*. The *godel* is usually rather more massive
than the *maq'su*. The blacksmith, when giving an axe its first edge 412
or a new edge to a blunt axe, heats the axe well in his forge, and
thoroughly hammers the actual edge. He then heats it again, and 326
hammers it flat on each side till he forms a new edge. He repeats
the heating, and grinds down the edge by rubbing each side down
a lump of stone. After a further slight heating he dips it in cold
water to temper the edge, which is then ready for use. The haft
is set at slightly less than a right-angle to the blade, the thick
socket being wedged with a thin slip of wood.

A type of axe found still sometimes in the hill villages, where it 412
is known as *pata endanna maq'su* (the song-and-dance axe, because 535

---

[1] Hutton, *Angami Nagas*, p. 63.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

412
535
when the old men of to-day were young it was the decorated axe carried by all Hill Maria men dancers), is similar to the *pharsi* battle-axe of the plains tribes. The blade is crescent-shaped, the concave being the cutting edge, and the convex outer edge being socketed in the centre to receive the haft, which fits in the same vertical plane as the cutting edge. I have seen one of these axes measuring 41 cm. between the horns of the crescent.

411
The Hill Marias use small throwing spears made in one piece of iron, of the same type as the much larger solid spears used by the Murias of Amabera and north Kondagaon. They have leaf-shaped but very long blades, shafts with a knob counterpoise and, below the knob, spiked butts about a foot long. They are not nowadays very skilled throwers, there being scarcely any game in the hills. The thrower stands at a right incline to his target, and, holding the spear by the point of balance, uses much the same action as the javelin thrower of modern athletics.

411
224
The Bison-horn Maria uses a long and powerful stabbing spear for killing the big game, including tiger and panther, that his beaters drive into his nets. This is about 8½ to 9 feet (2·6 to 2·8 metres) long, and consists of an iron head socketed on to a long bamboo shaft. The head consists of a blade about 30 cm. long and 7 cm. wide at the greatest width just above the shank, whence the wings taper with a slight convexity to the point; a shank nearly as long, slightly thinner where it leaves the blade than where it ends in the socket; and a socket about 22 cm. long, generally with one or more iron or brass rings which are forced down over the socket from the shank when the shaft has been inserted, to tighten the grip of the socket on the shaft. The socket below these rings often forms a convenient grip for the right hand, when the huntsman leans on his upright spear with his right upper arm extended horizontally from his elbow, and the elbow bent for the hand to grip the spear above the plane of the crown of the head. When the quarry is netted, the spear has its point lowered to the front pointing slightly downwards, the left arm is bent for the hand to grasp the spear well below the socket, while the right hand grasps it about a foot from the butt-end of the shaft, and the spearman sprints forward and stabs the quarry with a smart two-handed downward thrust.

411
The last weapons to be described are bows and arrows. The Hill Marias call the bow *villu*, and the Bison-horn Marias *ville*; the word, strictly speaking, means the stave only, the cord being *ha'undi* in the former and *panti* in the latter language. The stave is nearly always of bamboo, but the Bison-horn Marias, who generally use more powerful weapons than the hill men, sometimes

use very powerful staves of *dhaman* (*Grewia tiliaefolia*) wood, the 411
bow when strung measuring 6 feet from horn to horn. Of the Hill Maria staves measured by me, the thickest circumference varied from 6·5 to 9 cm. All the bows which I have seen are plain bows, used for spear-arrows and club-arrows; I have never seen any compound, composite or pellet bows. The back of the stave is the natural curved exterior of the bamboo; the belly is pared flat. The string is a carefully sliced piece of the outside of a green bamboo [283
cut with a portion of the natural knots at each end trimmed into knobs, round which loops of twine[1] made from the fibre of the *siari* 824]
(*Bauhinia vahlii*) creeper are tied in notches (*kiddi* in both dialects) 25 to 40 mm. from the tips of the horns. One loop is permanently bound to the notch of the lower horn, the free loop being only sprung into the upper notch when the bowman strings the bow by resting the lower horn on the ground and bending the stave by holding his knee in its belly and pulling the upper horn towards him. The *lower* horn is called *modol* or *talla*, i.e. head, and the *upper* horn *kodi* ('point') or *toqa* ('tail').

In the Abujhmar mountains the longest bowstring which I measured was 135 cm. from notch to notch, and the shortest, a child's bow, 110 cm. The greatest distance from the belly of the stave to the string of a bow strung but not drawn was 10 cm.

Arrows are called *kandi* by the Hill and *kar* by the Bison-horn 411
Marias; this refers to spear-arrows only. *Kar* strictly means the arrow-head only, the Bison-horn Marias having no separate word 192
for the whole arrow. The other terms used are:—

Term	Hill Maria	Bison-horn Maria
Arrow-head	*kani*	*kar*
Barb	*keru*	*ker*
Shaft	*kand-meri*	*kara*
Shaft-nock	*iksal*	*pisel*
Feathering	*kand-toqoshu*	*kar-gerring*
Club-arrow	*bito*	*mitom-kara*
Head of club-arrow	*bonka*	*mitom*

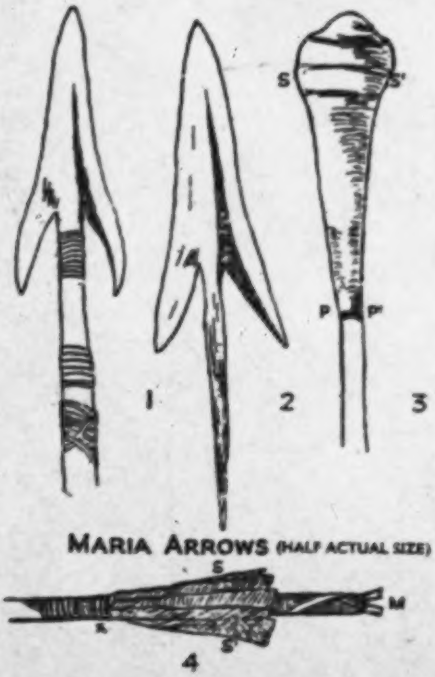
The Hill Maria spear-arrows have a total length of 56 to 59 cm., 411
that of their club-arrows varying from 51 to 64 cm. The Bison-horn arrows are longer in shaft and head, like their bows. Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4, Figure 2, on page 86, are full-size representations of typical Abujhmar arrow-heads. The wings curve convexly or concavely from point to tips of barbs. The Bison-horn Maria arrows are similar in shape, but are far larger, often measuring 15 cm. or more from the point of the blade to the head of the tang, have longer barbs, and are therefore slenderer in both blade and barb. All

---

[1] Used in the technical sense of the word.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

411 spear arrow-heads have, whether seen from the obverse or the reverse, a groove in the thickness of the right wing starting deep between the tang and the barb, and becoming shallower as it tapers upwards to a point a little below the point of the blade. No. 2, Figure 2 below shows a bare arrow-head with typical pointed tang, which is heated and then worked like a gimlet into the head of the shaft almost to its full length.[a] It is then pulled out of the hollowed shaft, and melted lac, if available, is poured into the hollow as packing before the tang is finally re-inserted; a little piece of rag is used when lac is not to be had. The shaft is then whipped with floss silk or thin strips of hide as shown in No. 1. The head of a typical club-arrow is shown in No. 3; it is a natural bamboo knot tapered with a knife from the natural thickness at SS' to that at PP'. The head of the shaft is fitted at PP' into the natural



MARIA ARROWS (HALF ACTUAL SIZE)

FIGURE 2

[a] [see cat. 116, p. 420. — Analyst]

hollow of the knot, and packed in one of the ways already explained. Club-arrows are used to kill small birds, and to teach boys to shoot. The blacksmith will charge 1 anna or a pound of *kutki* grain for a spear arrow-head.

Both Hill and Bison-horn Marias use only peacock or peahen tail-feathers to feather their arrows. No. 4, Figure 2, shows the method. First the nock M is made by splitting the end of the shaft and removing a little wood and pith; the nock and the shaft are then whipped with *kosa* silk or thin hide strips as far as the point SS' inside the feathering. Seven or nine pieces of peafowl's brown feather are then whipped by the quill around the shaft at X, so that the trimmed edges of the feathers protrude fanwise from the shaft. The quills are also tied round the shaft at SS' with cotton thread.

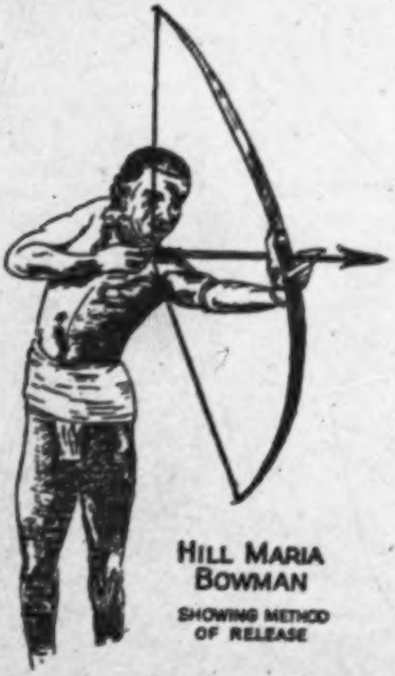


FIGURE 3

The release is shown in the drawing above. The bow is held a little out of the perpendicular, the upper horn being canted a little

411 to the marksman's right. He stands obliquely to his target, with
feet slightly apart and body bending forward over the left hip. The nock in the arrow shaft is held to the string of the bow, in the Abujhmar hills by the index and middle fingers only of the right hand unless the marksman is not strong enough not to use his third finger also; the Bison-horn Marias always use all three. The left thumb rests perpendicularly along the inner edge of the belly of the stave, the arrow resting, on the left of the stave, in the arch between the left thumb and index finger. The latter is laid lightly along the top of the shaft and pointed as a sight towards the target. The other left fingers are brought round the back of the stave. The string is then drawn to the rear by the right hand and released. No ring or other protector is worn on the thumb, though it is sometimes cut on the inner side a little above the knuckle.

Glasfurd, in para. 87 of his report, thus describes another form of release :—

> 'All the Marias . . . often use the feet in bending the bow, while they pull the string with both hands. An arrow discharged in this manner, it is said, would almost pass through the body of a man or deer: this method is only had recourse to in elevated positions, such as from the tops of rocks, hills, and precipices, upon any object below.'

Despite many enquiries, I never found a modern hill or plain Maria who could use this method. A few old men said it was used by wandering 'Nahal' hunters, now very rarely met in Bastar; none could remember it ever being used by Marias.

No quivers are used by any Marias. Arrows are carried in
415 the hand, or by fixing the point of a barb in the hair-tuft, or in
a cord tied round the head if bald.

No Marias appear ever to use a musical bow on a winnowing-fan
534 over a pot of water as is done by low Hindu castes and Murias
171 around Kondagaon for the *Tija* festival in the month of Bhadon.

The Hill Maria slays a very occasional panther or barking-deer
151 with his bow, but is not a good shot. The Bison-horn Maria, on
the other hand, is often a deadly shot up to forty or fifty yards. A young man in a village just below the Aranpur pass, with a powerful bow of *dhaman* (*Grewia tiliaefolia*) wood at fifty paces range sent an arrow through the bullseye of a target which I set up for him against a *tendu* (*Diospyros melanoxylon*) tree; it penetrated 4 cm. into the very hard wood of that tree.

No other actual weapons are used by Marias, save for an
411 occasional old sword of one of the traditional Indian *talwar*
patterns which has survived the general disarming after the 1910 rebellion. But it is as well to describe here the few digging hand-tools used.

241

Hoes (see Figure 4)

The chief agricultural implement of the Hill Marias, with which he hacks up the surface of his *penda* slopes and his occasional patches of permanent cultivation, is his *gudari*, known to the Bison-horn Marias as *kargudar*, and in the Halbi language as *bhalu korki* or 'bear hoe'. This, like the *maq'su* axe, is an iron blade in form suggestive of a long stone celt. It is in form very like the *maq'su* axe, but the socket is reversed so that the long handle is fixed in the same way as the handle of an adze, at an angle of about 80° to the blade when laid flat on the ground. The blade is rather bigger than that of

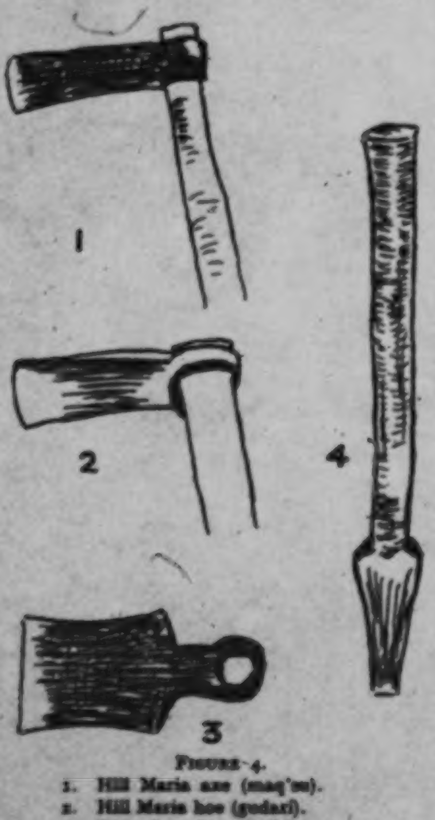


FIGURE 4.

1. Hill Maria axe (maq'su).
2. Hill Maria hoe (gudari).
3. Bison-horn hoe (korki).
4. Hill Maria digging iron (pulo).

241 the ordinary axe, and there is little or no 'waist' by the socket. It is, on a smaller scale, like the Cornish biddox.

Though this is used by some Bison-horn Marias in the remoter tracts, its use is now definitely a sign of the Hill Maria. The Bison-horn Maria uses the ordinary *korki* of the plains, which the Hill Maria calls *koq-gudari*; the villages on the edge of the Abujhmar hills are beginning to use it instead of the *gudari*, but it is never seen in the villages in the interior of the hills. This is a shouldered iron hoe, the blade from the shoulders to the digging edge being almost square, the sides being only slightly longer than the edge. It scores over the *gudari* because it can also be used to scoop and shovel earth.

Last must be mentioned the solid iron crowbar or digging-stick, found in all Maria houses, and throughout Bastar. But in the
[171] Abujhmar hills it is interesting to find that it is sometimes shouldered
and is in form very like the Madras Sawaras' shouldered iron hoe
illustrated at p. 361 of Hutton's *India Census Report* (1931). This
is known to the Hill Marias as *pulu*. I have seen similar shouldered
specimens occasionally among the Bison-horn Marias, and was told
that they had been imported from the Malkangiri taluq of the
Jeypore Agency; but there is no coming and going between that
Agency and the Abujhmar hills. Of all the Marias' iron weapons
[435] and implements the *pulu* is the dearest, owing to the weight of iron
used. The blacksmiths charge a rupee, the price of three *gudari* or
two axes. It is generally about a metre long, and the shouldered
portion is about a quarter of the total length. Plain unshouldered
specimens are more common. Its chief use is for digging up the
various yams and jungle roots in the rains that form so important
a part of the diet of all Bastar Koitor. Or it is useful for digging
holes for the posts of houses, or grubbing up stumps, etc.; it never
is used as a hoe.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

CHAPTER V

CHARACTER

157 'Without exception they are the most cheerful, light-hearted people I have met with, always laughing and joking among themselves. Seldom does a Maria village resound with quarrels or wrangling among either sex; and in this respect they present a marked contrast to those in more civilised tracts. They, in common with many other wild races, bear a singular character for truthfulness and honesty, and when once they get over the feeling of shyness, which is natural to them, they are exceedingly frank and communicative. Curious as all savages, the commonest article of domestic use is to them an object of interest; they are quick to observe and to learn.'—Glasfurd's 1862 Report, para. 89.

'In their own hills they are a bold and hardy race, industrious as cultivators, and truthful to a proverb; and, though shy and timid with those they do not know, are quickly won over by kindness. They form, indeed, not only one of the most interesting, but one of the most improvable of the aboriginal tribes of India.'—Lucie-Smith's 1869 Chanda Settlement Report, para. 111.

177 157 MERCIFULLY the Hill Marias and, to a less extent, the Bison-horn Marias have been spared the attention of the improver, and hitherto have been left fairly free to develop on their own lines and to adjust themselves to the increasing impact of modern India on the surrounding lowlands. The shyness already mentioned is still very marked in the hills, and also among the remoter villages not only of Bison-horn Marias and Koyas, but also of Parjas and Murias. But the ordinary Bison-horn Maria of the open tracts, with the steady expansion of communications and frequent visits by the Chief and the Diwan to the Bailadila hills, has come more and more into contact with the outer world; he often comes into Jagdalpur for Dasehra or market or to work on the public works, or even to show his children the sights of the '*sahar*' or 'city', especially the power-house and the pumps of the new waterworks.

609 157 In the Abujhmar hills all is well if visitors are expected. Otherwise, as in Glasfurd's day, all the inhabitants are liable to rush off into the jungle on the sudden appearance of an unusual number of persons or a white man. When marching from Orcha to Adeq (Ader) in Chhota Dongar Mar *pargana* in February 1930, I left the main path to see the village of Tondawada. I was not expected in the village, and though I had with me a number of Maria youths from Orcha well known to several women of Tondawada, yet my approach was the signal for a general *sauve-qui-peut*; the dogs barked, the few cattle were hastily driven off into the hills, and women and boys fled helter-skelter to the hills, even including

609 151 a large party of women who had assembled to keen over an old woman who had just died. Pigs also were driven off, and a youth, who was caught lurking near us to 'rescue' three stray cows and brought to me, advanced to me as delicately as Agag, with his knife unsheathed and held in readiness to defend his life. This lad was quickly reassured and shouted out, whereupon to our surprise four or five other lads came down from trees around us, where they had taken shelter, their curiosity being on the whole stronger than their fear. Ultimately the women felt that the corpse could not be left unmourned any longer, and came back in twos and threes to be reassured by the boys. They were then in two minds whether to resume keening or to see as much as possible of the queer ways of so unheard-of an apparition as a white man. When I came to see the keening it was altogether too much, and they at once left the body and crowded round me; when I had it explained that I wanted to see how funerals were conducted and to photograph them, they very obligingly squatted down in their original places, and began even more doleful keenings than before. It seemed only proper to remove my distracting presence as soon as I could, but the keeners were with difficulty dissuaded from seeing me on my way to Adeq.

Timidity of this kind is unusual among the Bison-horn Marias; but there are many villages among them where few women can have seen a white man. To appear on foot or on a car along a forest road where groups of women are gathering forest fruits is usually the signal for them to rush off into the thickets, leaving their baskets and gear: but if you return that way later after having spent an hour or two in neighbouring villages, they will come timidly out to you on the road, and gradually lose their earlier fears.

152 The highlanders and lowlanders alike are extremely curious. In the Abujhmar hills I have frequently had parties of men, youths and girls coming into my tent or hut to see my strange ways of getting up, shaving and dressing, and their curiosity has been embarrassing when they have tried to watch even the performance of natural functions. I have had to brush my hair a dozen times over to satisfy those who had not seen me do it the first time, and to demonstrate the use of every article on my dressing or office tables. They will sit for hours watching a typewriter, and speculating on how it works. A motor-car is a source of endless delight, whether it be the distorted reflections seen in the polished radiator, or the noises of the bulb and electric horns. They thump it to test its materials, or crawl underneath to be fascinated by the strange sights that reward their trouble. But it takes time to get them to agree to try a ride inside, and when they do, they start off with

a fearful pride, but soon lose their fear, and try to crowd into the 152
seats; their women, however, are as reluctant to risk entering a car
as any old village woman in Cornwall thirty-five years ago. It was
a pleasure later in the day to see the bold adventurers of the morning
who watched the white man's toilet operations conducting parties
of sight-seers into the tent and pantomiming the use of brush, razor
and everything there. The Bison-horn Maria is more sophisticated,
and will not intrude without being asked, nor is he so curious about
small things; but a motor-car is as great a draw to him as to the
hill men. Both are very interested in seeing a carburettor stripped 153
and assembled or a tyre changed, or any mechanical repairs; they
show quick intelligence, and could soon be taught. In the spate
of bridge building on the State roads in recent years they have been
quick to grasp methods of sinking piles or getting great beams into
position, and have not been slow to offer suggestions that have
sometimes been practicable. The newly built road bridge over
the Indrawati at Jagdalpur is really built according to the same
method as the bridges which even Hill Marias construct across
their rivers, with modern and stronger materials and other
improvements.

My inquisitiveness about their houses, habits, possessions,
agriculture and customs in their eyes must seem much like their
curiosity about my ways. Actually their mental processes are not
unlike ours, when allowance is made for their centuries of isolation;
they are certainly more receptive than the ordinary villager of
British India, whose thought has for generations been stunted by
the cumbrous wrappings of caste and debased Hinduism. A striking 751
instance of this is the comparative ease with which vaccination was
made compulsory years ago throughout the State and is welcomed
by the Marias, in strong contrast to the keen opposition to it even
in the cities of British India and to the caution venturing on
timidity with which provincial Governments make tentative
advances in the direction of universal compulsion. Not only is
vaccination really universal even in the hill villages, but the Marias
are keenly alive to the advantages of inoculation for cholera and
yaws, and, in fact, are inclined to demand '*tika*' or inoculation for
every ailment, those of them, that is, who have seen for themselves
cholera checked or yaws cured by injections; for till recently no
medical relief other than vaccination had reached the hills.

In natural cheerfulness few races can surpass the Hill Marias, 157
who, like all Gonds, are quick to see the fun of things, whether it be
something that spontaneously appeals to their sense of humour, or 522
a joke put to them by some outsider. Their humour is apt to be
broad. Very few serious disputes arise in Abujhmar, where a 000

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

very few serious disputes arise in Abujhmar, where a

674 murder is extremely rare and due usually to some suspicion of black magic. 572 The Bison-horn Maria, on the other hand, is subject to sudden fits of blind rage, especially after he has been taking large quantities of his intoxicating gruel, *landa*, which is anathema to the Hill Marias. In that state he will seize any weapon that comes to hand, whether it be his wife's heavy rice pestle, a log of wood, an axe or a bow and arrow, and murder for the most trivial of reasons; the State Jail at Jagdalpur has always a high percentage of Bison-horn Marias doing time for homicide. He also is capable of nursing his revenge for a long time; a recent example was given by a strapping Bison-horn Maria from Palnar, who, after serving twelve years of a commuted death sentence, soon after his release took the first chance of picking a quarrel with a man whom he considered deliberately to have let him down by not giving evidence in his defence twelve years before, and battered his head in with a heavy bamboo stick. The Bison-horn Maria will in his fury declare an implacable enmity by stalking round his foe's house three times, either plucking straws from the thatch, or whistling the peculiar *su'i* whistle, or throwing some of his own pubic hairs at the house; and murder is the inevitable result. There were twenty-seven murder trials in Bastar between 1917 and 1923, and in eighteen of them the murderers were Bison-horn Marias, but only two of the murders were committed by Hill Marias. About half the Bison-horn Maria murders are committed in *landa* intoxication, and almost the same proportion in sudden fits of rage about nothing; for example, wives often are killed when the husband dislikes his food or it is not ready for him; one even lost her life for refusing to cook for her husband when he woke up hungry in the middle of the night. But there are on record Bison-horn Maria murders committed for all the ordinary sordid and criminal murder motives; the Bison-horn Maria is a man of far stronger feelings than the Hill Maria. [158] The former actually runs amuck on occasion like the Malay; in two such cases the offender pleaded that he suffered from fits and ran amuck under the delusion, in the one case, of pursuit and, in the other, of possession by evil spirits and of the imminence of a new rebellion. 628 Cain indeed wrote in 1876 that 'blood revenge' had hardly died out in the Godavari valley, and was said to be 'in full exercise' in Bastar. The only apparent case of a hereditary vendetta of which I am aware occurred in Orcha, a Hill Maria village, where a grandfather and his son were murdered at long intervals for suspected witchcraft, while the grandson conveniently fell off a sago-palm tree as soon as he was old enough to claim the hereditary post of *pargana* headman. 692 There is a strong feeling everywhere of an eye for an eye and a tooth

for a tooth; but nowadays this is generally satisfied by invoking 692
the police and the courts. But distances are great in Bastar, and
in the rains, when the early hill grains are ripe, communications are
bad; often the villagers conspire to hush up a murder or leave it
to those affected to take their own direct action, rather than
disorganize agricultural work by the troubles of a long police
enquiry followed by committal proceedings and a sessions trial.

It is a relief to return from this darker side of the Bison-horn 157
Maria's character to the light-heartedness of all Marias, but especially
the Hill Maria. An engaging feature of this is his readiness to 522
burlesque himself. A village *gaita* (headman) at Tondawada set 551
the whole camp in fits of laughter by his description of his first vain
attempts to use a pair of bullocks in the plough, mimicking himself
pulled hither and thither by these wild-cat animals; at Hikul I was
treated to a similar comic representation of what would happen if
a Maria attempted to milk a cow. They are quick to seize on any
foibles or peculiarities of individuals, without respect of persons,
and have a happy knack of inventing apposite nicknames; this
trait is common throughout the State, where there are nicknames
for almost every State official current among all the primitive
tribes, while few of the leading Hindu and Mohammedan settlers
are referred to by their true names.

Frankness and honesty are still as characteristic as ever of the 157
hill men and the wilder Bison-horn Marias, and many a man
arraigned for homicide will state in court perfectly frankly why it 577
was essential to kill his victim and how it was done. I have very
seldom found any hesitate to answer any questions, even about
the most intimate domestic matters. The Bison-horn Maria,
however, being, at least in the open tracts, more sophisticated, is
inclined to be suspicious; and he certainly is learning the ways of
the courts, and how to defeat a justice administered on the evidence
and not according to the facts; many know, for example, that the
death penalty may be escaped if you can convince your judge that
you murdered your victim because you believed him to be bewitching
you. But in general a Maria witness can still be relied upon to
speak the truth, although it involve his dearest relatives or himself
in trouble; and the occasional pleader from British India is soon
hopelessly at sea if he tries his usual methods of cross-examination
even on a Bison-horn Maria who knows Halbi. Fortunately, the
restoration of the criminal and civil jurisdiction of the village and
pargana panchayats will considerably reduce Maria experience of
the law courts. The Hill Maria never has had much recourse to [674]
them, petty theft being almost unknown and murder rare. His
attitude may to some extent be gauged by the following example. 695

C

695 There was a disputed boundary between the village of Kurmer in the Chhota Dongar Mar *pargana* and the adjacent Kutru Mar village of Jatalur; the Jata clan asserted possession over a strip of land belonging to the Parllo clan of Kurmer. I suggested, on the strength of a tale I had heard of former Chiefs' methods of justice, that the head of each village should come with a cock to the land, and that the land should go to the clan whose cock crowed first. This was hailed by both sides as a sound solution, and off we went to the land; but just before we reached it the Jata headman began to hang back, and finally backed out of the test; I awarded the land to the Parllo clan to the approval of men present from other clans, and on going over the land found that it contained a *pagk'ai* or alternative village site of the Parllo clan besides the cromlech left to mark the site of the Village Mother's 'temple', the *kasyeq-gaita's udam-garia* or seat of honour, and the *kotokal* or line of menhirs erected in the name of the Parllo dead. Here the Jata clan finally abandoned their claim when challenged by the Parllo *kasyeq-gaita* to eat earth from under the Village Mother's cromlech.

To be left to live the free life of the hills, untrammelled by
181 restrictions on his user of forest, earth and water or his right to
shift his village and his *penda* cultivation, is the unconscious ideal
of the Hill Maria. If he is sentenced to a long term of imprisonment,
he will beg to be hanged rather than be confined within walls; and
few of them or of the wilder Bison-horn Marias survive long
imprisonment.

517 The Hill Maria shows great artistry in his bead-work, and is
never at fault in his discrimination between colours and shades,
[802] though he uses for all shades of green and blue the one word
kaparondla. He has general terms also for red, white, black and
yellow, but none for intermediate shades. In his houses he draws
532 rude cup-marking patterns, *swastikas* and strange creatures in
white earth on his mud plaster, or makes rough clay representations
of women's breasts. His songs are low and rather melancholic in
533 sound, the youths' voices verging on contralto; but they are far
easier for an English ear to understand than Hindu music, and have
often a haunting refrain. Both he and the Bison-horn Maria love
to hear European records on a gramophone, especially a good
soprano or contralto, sea shanties, and violins or trios and quartets
playing light chamber music; but operatic fireworks merely provoke
laughter, Chaliapin singing the 'Song of Prince Igor' making them
[534] ache with laughter, but being often encored. The Marias as a
whole have no musical instruments except drums. Though the
517 Bison-horn Maria does not show the Hill Maria's artistry and
153

colour sense in bead-work, it is noticeable that the best carpet weavers in Jagdalpur Jail are almost invariably Bison-horn Marias. They are quick to grasp intricacies of pattern, and there is hardly any pattern that they cannot copy. For years the chief instructor in the jail was the double murderer from Palnar already mentioned in this chapter. 517 153

The Marias of both kinds are very hospitable. On entering a Hill Maria village you are met by the elders and offered little gifts, an uncouth yam, or dried tobacco leaves and forest fruits. The whole village co-operates to get your camp ready, and to entertain you at night with song and dance. The occasional stranger from other Koitor villages or minor State official is housed and fed, provided he does not outstay his welcome or attempt to be exacting in his demands. Co-operation, in service to the State, in village festivals, in felling of forest for *penda* cultivation, in allotment of *penda* areas, in sowing, reaping, winnowing and storing of grain, in fishing and hunting, is the key to the social life of the Hill Maria, who is a natural communist; his hospitality is perhaps mainly an expression of his ingrained co-operation, though he is genuinely glad to see you after a long absence, and will greet you with tears of joy. The Bison-horn Maria is more of an individualist, or, rather, less of a communist, than the hill man, but he likes to entertain for a wedding or to celebrate the completion of a new *munda* (small rice irrigation tank) and similar occasions on a lavish scale, keeping open house. All Marias are extremely grateful for any benefit received and for sympathy and interest. 574 [476]

[p. 98 is blank]

500

PART III

DOMESTIC LIFE AND ECONOMY

'What have your wastes to do
With the earth-treader, the earth-tiller; this frail
Body of man; the sower, whom the green shoot gladdens;
Hewer of trees; the builder, who houses him from the bleak winds,
And whom awaits at last long peace beneath the grass
In soil his fathers knew?'—LAURENCE BINYON, 'The Sirens'.

[p. 99]

[p. 100 is blank]

CHAPTER VI

VILLAGES, HOUSES AND THEIR CONTENTS

A. *Hill Maria Villages, Houses and their Contents*

361 THE site of the Hill Maria village is in these days almost entirely
determined by its convenience as a centre from which to cultivate
the *penda* slopes of the year. Peace has reigned in the Abujhmar
hills from time immemorial, and no question of defence arises
when a village is built. A possible relic of former unsettled times
[349] is the custom of building stone cairns and seats as look-outs at the
head of passes or the summits of hills on the paths leading to
villages; but these are convenient watching places for herdsmen
when their cattle are grazing around the hill-tops, and serve also
to mark the line of the paths which, in the rains, are overgrown
with rank grass, or fall into disuse when villages or *penda* slopes
487 are abandoned for alternative sites. Certain well-defined tracks
through the hills are cleared annually by the villagers; these often
avoid the actual village sites, to which side tracks connect them.
There are no carts in the hills, and therefore the tracks are only
foot-paths, generally wide enough only for a party to walk in single
file, though at the periodic clearings the grass is cut down to a
width of two or three feet on each side of the path. The village
361 boundary is usually marked by a cairn of stones, in the centre of
which may be planted a pole ornamented at the top with bunches
of grass or peacock or jungle-cock feathers, the pole being further
adorned by peeling off bands of bark at intervals throughout its
length. The boundary itself is usually a stream, and the cairns of
the two villages are usually twenty or thirty yards apart, so that
[783] when the annual *pira-mansha* (called by the Bison-horn Marias
rog-burria and by Halbi-speakers *boharani*) ceremony of ridding
the village of disease takes place, the old winnowing-fans with the
sweepings of each house can be hung up beyond the boundary on
this no-man's-land without leaving them on the lands of the
neighbouring village.

487 These paths cross streams by stepping-stones, by logs felled
across the stream, by small raised embankments pierced by hollowed
491 tree trunk pipes for the passage of the water and revetted with
horizontally laid logs, or by bridges consisting of a plank supported
by bamboo wicker-work cylinders filled with boulders resting on

487 the bed of the stream ; these are held in position between upright
poles set V-wise in the boulders, to which are fastened horizontal
491 bamboo poles as railings. As they have no saws, the ' plank ' is
[322] a tree trunk with one side trimmed flat with the axe. Even more
elaborate bridges are sometimes made at high levels over streams
liable to flood, from tree-fork to tree-fork on opposite banks.

Though, as has been said above, agricultural conditions
361 nowadays determine village sites, hill-tops or rocky slopes remain
favourite sites, and become commoner as you penetrate farther into
the Abujhmar hills. The traditional arrangement is a street some
[363] twenty-five yards wide between parallel lines of long-houses ; at
one end of the street is the *gotul-lon* or village dormitory, generally
within a rounded bamboo fence, and sometimes in front of this
dormitory will be seen the *udam-garia* or seat of honour of the
kasyeq-gaita and possibly also of the secular headman (*gaita* or *peda*),
as well as the stones on which the other village elders sit around
with them in conclave ; but the *udam-garia* custom is not found in
[778] all parts of the hills. Sometimes the shrine of the *Nar-Talughi* or
Village Mother is actually inside the dormitory fencing, and she is
often housed there for a while when a village is being shifted.
There are, as a rule, no *bari* (vegetable gardens) attached to each
house as amongst most Gonds, including the Bison-horn Marias
and the Murias of Bastar ; but sometimes the *kasyeq-gaita* has
a small tobacco *bari* attached to the dormitory in the centre of the
main street. The *Gazetteer* (p. 50) speaks of the ' common granary '
as standing in the broad street ; but with one partial exception,
Nugur village in Kutru Mar in the Indrawati valley, I have never
343 seen this. The villagers generally construct a row of granaries
(*manda* or *wijja-dodi*) on piles at the side or rear of the main village
251 street, sometimes nearer the *penda* fields than the village ; this row
can hardly be called a ' common granary ', as each villager has his
own granary in the row for his own private food and seed store,
the granaries being built together only for convenience, as they
can then be watched at night by one watchman for the whole
village, sleeping in a special hut at the side of the granaries or under
a granary. At Nugur there were big matting bins in the main
street in which all the rice seed of the village was stored ; but here
[426] the village had come under the economic thraldom of some Teli
tradesmen, who for years had advanced rice to the cultivators.
The bins were left in the collective charge of the headman and elders,
and any villager could help himself to seed on the understanding
that at harvest he would replace it with 50 per cent. interest,
the Teli owners being also free to remove the surplus from time
to time.

This traditional arrangement of the Hill Maria villages is far 361 from being always observed. I have seen a village constructed in this way on one of its traditional sites (*pagh* or *pagha'i* ; Murias say *pare*, while Bison-horn Marias generally use the Halbi word *padar*), and then four years later found it reconstructed on one of the alternative sites with little sign of the traditional grouping ; and I have also seen the converse occur. In fact, the configuration of the site may make the traditional arrangement difficult. It is also being gradually abandoned in the villages on the edges of the hills into which the individualism of surrounding plains villages is creeping, and in the few villages such as Orcha and Hikul which have good permanent rice cultivation ; in the latter villages there is [241] a growing tendency not to shift the sites when the surrounding *penda* slopes are exhausted, but to cultivate even remote slopes from the village site in the vicinity of the permanent rice fields. As the old feeling of village community weakens, houses are no longer built as long-houses, each containing groups of three or four houses occupied by brothers or near paternal cousins, but are built detached, each with its own granary close to it, instead of the householder having one compartment in the long granary row ; even then, however, the detached houses tend to group themselves roughly into lines flanking a central open space, at one end of which is the village dormitory (*gotul-lon*), in its usual position. Even when a village site is becoming permanent, as at Orcha and Hikul, any sudden calamity, such as crop failure, epidemic or epizootic, will probably induce the villagers to shift. In several villages the *kasyaq-gaita* always keeps a hen sitting on eggs inside his house, [787] and the addling of an undue proportion of these is frequently a signal for the shifting of the village ; but a wise *gaita* does not let his eggs get addled unless there is really sound economic or religious reason for shifting, when the omens can be made to suit the occasion.

Behind each line of houses will be found rows of pig-sties, at 343 least one for each house ; and the pigs often seem better housed than their masters. 231 Where, as around Orcha, sal (*Shorea robusta*) or other timber is plentiful, the pig-sties are generally made of sections of tree trunk or large boughs laid horizontally between vertical stays, with an opening in front which can be closed by dropping vertical posts over it between horizontal stays at the top and bottom of the opening. These sties are sheltered from the sun by grass-thatched roofs sloping back from two or more vertical posts about 6 feet high to similar posts about 4 feet high in the rear. Dug-out troughs of sal wood are kept outside or just inside the sties for water and food for the pigs ; the commonest food is a mash made from the chaff or husks of *kosra* (*kutki ; Panicum miliaceum*) and

343 other minor grains. Where timber is not available, these sties are made from bamboos, or even from stones. Similar but, of course, 231 far smaller structures are made to serve as hen-coops, resting generally against the side or front of the houses.

The shrine of the Village Mother, as has been stated above, 778 is sometimes actually inside the village dormitory, sometimes just 361 outside it, and sometimes at a considerable distance from the actual village, in a grove, if possible of *saja* (*Terminalia tomentosa*—every- [824] where the sacred tree of the Gond) trees. Sometimes there is also in the village, often at the end of the street opposite the dormitory, the hut-temple of the *pen* or clan-god, containing the log-frame image of the god. This will normally be found only in the village of the *pen-wadda'i* or priest of the clan-god; but sometimes, where the villages of the clan are far apart, there may be two copies of the clan-god, or the god may go to visit other villages, and have a resting-shed in each; or he may have begotten a son to deputize for him in the distant village; I have seen in a *pen-rawar* (clan-god's temple) both the *pen* himself and an embryo 'son' in the second of his three years' 'gestation'. The *pen* is always covered by a shed; but the Village Mother sometimes is just a cairn or a basket-cylinder filled with stones, or a low table-stone at the foot of a *saja* tree, and close by there is a small shed of grass thatch with open sides in which are kept the cooking pots, ladles and sacrificial knife used at ceremonial feasts. The sacred grove may in very rare cases, in villages near the edge of the lowlands, have also a hut-temple of Danteshwari Mai or Maolai, the most revered or feared Hindu deities of Bastar.

There will be found well apart from the houses and the rest of 343 the village a menstruation hut in many villages, known as *pedawo'-* 841 *gha'i* to the Hill Marias, or sometimes as *dola-lon*. Here all menstruating women are secluded from the village for a week every month. Sometimes the hut has a single room, about 6 by 5 feet, with walls 3 feet high, with no windows and only a small door little bigger than the entrance to an English kennel; sometimes there are two rooms separated from each other by a partition, so that when a girl is afraid of being secluded by herself a duenna may sleep within sound of her without actual contact. The door of the seclusion room always opens away from the village, so that the affected woman may get out at night to answer the call of nature without overlooking the village or being visible to any villager. Special cooking pots and utensils are kept in the seclusion room, or else [589] the woman's food is cooked outside and left by her door for her. The roof is often covered with seed-bearing twigs of castor-oil plants, 824] in all parts of India regarded as very efficacious against magic.

[text continues on p. 106]

361
778
343

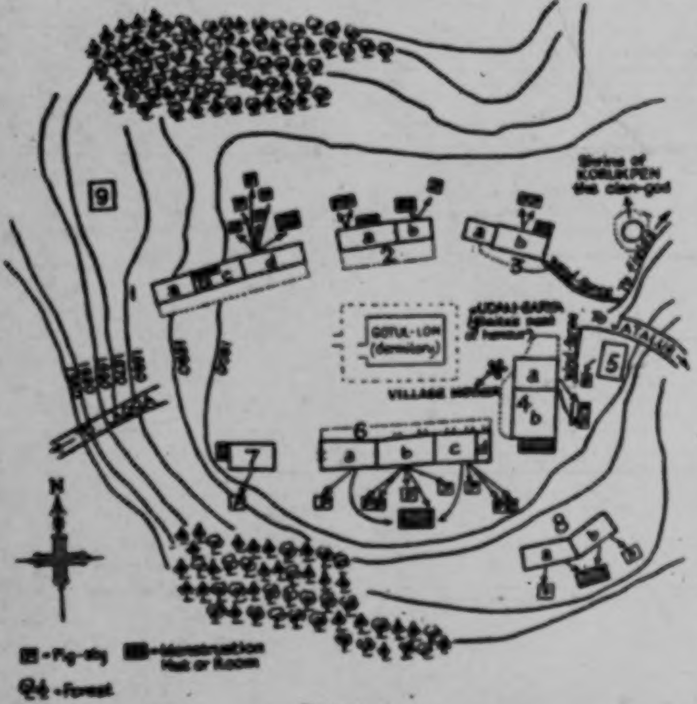


FIGURE 5

MAP OF KARANGAL VILLAGE OF THE PARLLO HILL MARIA CLAN, as occupied in February 1930. (Contours approximate.)

House-group 1 (a) Empty; built for Dada HUNGA, when serving for MURRA's niece; since marrying her, lives in KURMER. (b) P. BAIYYA's mother. (c) P. BAIYYA, wife and son. (d) P. MURRA, brother of BAIYYA, his wife, his son P. BANDE, wife and daughter.
2. (a) P. DOGA and wife. (b) P. KUTTA, wife, son. DOGA and KUTTA are elder and younger brothers, but separate in cultivation.
3. (a) Empty, since death of P. MURRA's elder brother's widow. (b) P. MURRA and wife.
4. (a) P. BAIYYA, kasyeq-gaita, and wife. (b) his son P. GURSA, wife and son.
5. Ruined house of P. KUTTO, who had left village.
6. (a) P. MURKA and wife. (b) P. KUTA, 2 wives, 1 son. (c) P. KEYE, wife and 2 sons. (d) KEYE's mother. KUTA, MURKA and KEYE regard themselves as brothers, KUTA being the eldest; they are paternal third cousins. Their fields and pigs are separate, but menstruation hut common.
7. P. PANDA, wife, 1 son, 2 daughters, widowed mother.
8. (a) P. HEODA, wife and son. (b) P. MASA (his wife had eloped). HEODA is the elder, MASA the younger brother.
9. The house of a Rawat (herdsman), well apart from Maria houses.

The wind-fence is a stockade of thick poles.
The dotted lines are bamboo wickerwork fences.

But in many villages instead of a communal *pedawo'gha'i* there is
343 a separate hut at the back of each long-house for the use of the
841 residents of each house contained in the long-house, called by the
same name; or else in each house there is a *pedawo'gha'i* room
known generally as *hala*,[1] with a door opening at the back of the
house, separated from the rest of the house by a *binda* or low mud
threshold about three feet from the back door. It is absolutely
[784] *polo* or taboo for any male to set foot in the menstruation hut or
room; I once saw a son who wanted to enter the house by the
back door take a flying leap from outside so as to land beyond
the *binda*. In every *hala* room there is a complete set of
cooking vessels and utensils for the woman to use while she is in
her courses, when it is *polo* for her to touch any of the regular
household articles. The menstruation hut or room is also the
scene of all child-births.

There is in some big villages a resting hut for travellers or
485 State officials, known as the *paik-gotul* or *Kos-gotul*; *paik* is the
word used for a member of the old militia, and *Kos* is the general
word used by all Gonds for Hindus. This may also have a stable
attached.

The sketch-plan on page 105 illustrates a fairly typical Hill Maria
361 village, crowning a mountain spur; it represents the site occupied
[35] in 1930 by the Kutru Mar village of Karangal. The long-houses
here had nearly all of them bamboo fences between them and the
street, running along their front about three or four feet from their
front wall. The doors have been shown only in the houses in long-house no. 6. The fences only give a little privacy, and spaces
useful for storing fuel; they are not garden (*bari*) enclosures.
Bamboo is very plentiful around Karangal; where it is less common,
these fences are absent. The stockades of thick poles at the eastern
side of this village were made to afford protection from the fierce
and cold wind blowing off the hills from the north-east. The
[778] Village Mother's shrine was a cylindrical basket of stones resting
on five boulders in the open space between the dormitory and the
karyeq-gaita's house, near the latter's *udam-garia* seat of honour.
This seat was a flat slab of stone resting on five thin slabs stuck
vertically in the ground. The *pen-rawar* shrine of the clan-god
Koruk Pen was a round hut surrounded with a bamboo fence to
the east of the village by the side of the path leading to the *penda*
fields; there is another shrine of this god at Nugur, a Parllo clan
village a few miles away in the Indrawati valley. In Karangal
361 the only non-Maria was a Maria-speaking Rawat herdsman, who
621 was allowed a house site at some distance from the main street;
[194]

---

[1] Or *ala*; the aspirate is often dropped by Hill Marias.

and every Maria house was occupied by members of the Parllo clan, 361
the only partial exception being the empty house (no. 1-a) which [621]
had till recently been occupied by a youth of the Deda clan, which
may intermarry with the Parllo clan, serving as *lamana'i* to win
the niece of Parllo Murra, occupant of house no. 1-d. It will be
observed that some long-houses have a joint menstruation hut at [343]
the rear of the house, while in some there is a separate *kala* for each house in the long-house. The *kasyeq-gaita's* house is at the dormitory end of the street, a very usual position.

The shifting of villages

It has already been implied that though a village site may be 361
abandoned for superstitious reasons, the predominant reason is
economic, the exhaustion of the *penda* slopes that 241
can be conveniently cultivated from the existing 621
village. If three or more *kaghai* (*penda* sites) can be dealt with from one *paghai* or village site, then the village may remain on that site for seven or eight years, even though there are other *paghai* in the other *penda* sites cultivated from it; or if any portion of the last *penda* site to be cultivated is very remote from it, then a few houses may be shifted there. What makes the old topographical survey maps so useless for finding a modern village is that they mark only the village site occupied in the sixties, generally, too, by the particular name of that site, not by the general name of the village. The big village of Orcha, for example, is not marked as such, but by the name of its *paghai* Hoinar. A reference to the sketch map of the parish (to use a term more suitable than 'village') of Handawada in Dantewara Mar (opposite p. 108) will make the position clear. The parish has ten alternative *kaghai* cultivation sites, viz. :—

1. Kawar *kaghai*, 1st half.
2. Ditto, 2nd half.
3. Irapmeta *kaghai*.
4. Hitangpal *kaghai*.
5. Kurmelnar *kaghai*.
6. Rekarai *kaghai*.
7. Handawada *kaghai*, 1st half.
8. Ditto, 2nd half.
9. Ahekele *kaghai*, 1st half.
10. Ditto, 2nd half.

Of these, nos. 1, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9 only contained *paghai* village sites. In February 1930 the main village was still settled in no. 9, but the *penda* slopes in nos. 9 and 10 had been exhausted, and those in no. 1 had been partly cultivated for the first year and were being reaped. Nos. 9 and 10 had lasted for six years and, though the villagers had started to cultivate no. 1 a long way below the village site in no. 9 and on the other side of the Goinder river, they were only then at harvest time starting to shift the village to the *paghai* in no. 2; in fact, the labour of the first year's work of clearing and cultivating a fresh *penda* slope is so heavy that the shifting of the village itself is, when necessitated by the distance of the existing site

[text continues on p. 109]

KEY TO FIGURE 6

361
241
621
427

KAGHAI NAMES (see p. 107).

1. Kawar, 1st half.
2. Do., 2nd half.
3. Irapmeta.
4. Hitanggal.
5. Kurmelnar.
6. Rekarai.
7. Handawada, 1st half.
8. Do., 2nd half.
9. Ahekele, 1st half.
10. Do., 2nd half.

The letters against fields in nos. 2 and 3 and houses and granaries in nos. 1, 3, 9 and 10 refer to the tenants in the list below. Tenants A to N are Gume by clan, O to Q, Tamo.

(*Abbreviations.*—M = mother, W = wife, S = grown-up son, b = boy child, g = girl child, D = marriageable daughter.)

Letter	*Tenant*	*Family*	*Area in acres*	*Rent* Rs.	a.
A	Modi s/o Malla	M., cousin's widow	5·00	2	4
B	Lalu s/o Banda, Bhum-gaita	W., 1 b.	4·50	1	12
C	Banda s/o Bursal	W., 2 g.	6·25	3	8
D	Horra s/o Musra	W., 1 g.	3·50	2	4
E	Masa s/o Kule, gaita	W., 1 S., 1 g.	7·50	4	12
F	Pido s/o Doga	W., 1 b.	3·50	2	0
G	Irpa s/o Karanje	W.	1·50	1	8
H	Rama s/o Peda Junga s/o Rama	W., 1 S., 2 g.	4·50	2 1	4 8
I	Kohla s/o Pahandi	W., 1 D., 1 man serving to win daughter's hand	4·00	1	8
J	Doga s/o Wijja	W., 1 b., 1 g.	4·00	1	12
K	Kuma s/o Boda	W., 1 g.	4·50	1	4
L	Juga s/o Wijja	M.	1·50	2	0
M	Malla s/o Gorra, Kasyeq-gaita	W., 1 S., 1 b., 1 g.	5·50	2	4
N	Pahandi s/o Karanje	W., M.	2·50	2	12
O	Hara s/o Pandu	W.	3·00	2	4
P	Bandi s/o Kuli	W., M., 2 b.	5·00	2	12
Q	Musra s/o Pandu	W.	2·25	2	4
		Total Acres	68·50	Rs.40	12
There was also in Ahekele Kaghai no. 9 a house shared by a Rawat and a Telugu with a small tobacco plot paying 4 annas rent					4
				Rs. 41	0

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

361
241
621
427

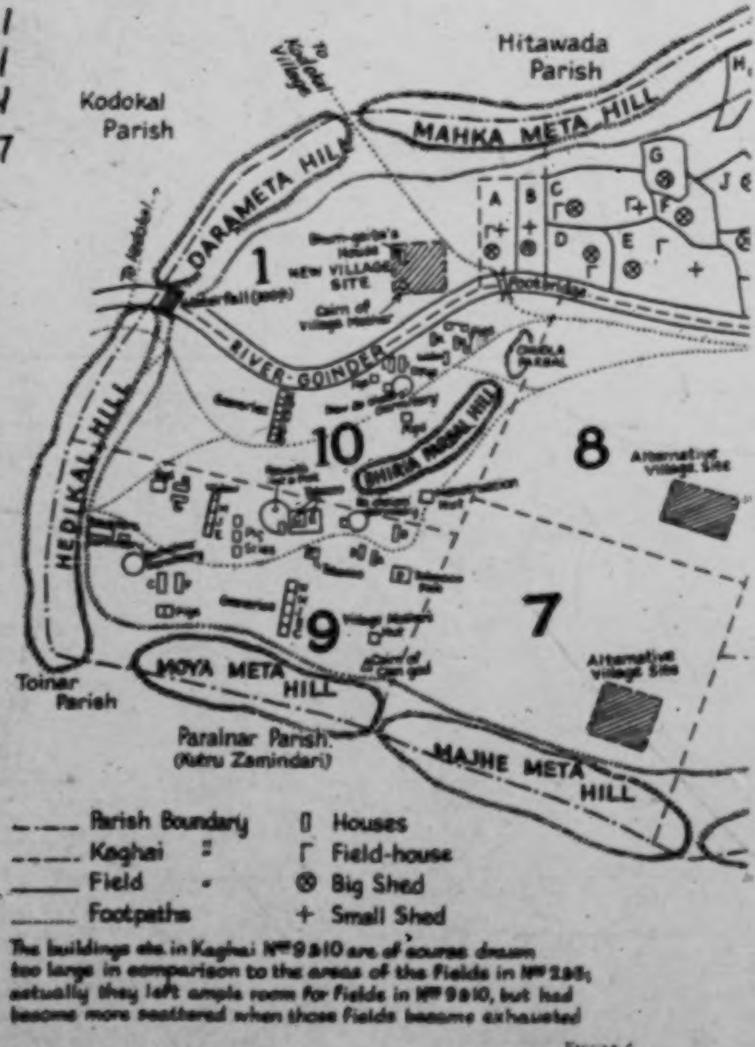

Hitawada Parish
Kodokal Parish
To Kodokal Village
MAHKA META HILL
DARAMETA HILL
A
B
C
D
E
F
G
J
1
NEW VILLAGE SITE
Cairn of Village Hunter
Waterfall
Footbridge
RIVER GOINDER
HEDIKAL HILL
10
8
Alternative Village Site
7
Alternative Village Site
9
MOYA META HILL
MAJHE META HILL
Toinar Parish
Parainar Parish (Kutru Zamindari)
Parish Boundary
Kaghai
Field
Footpaths
Houses
Field-house
Big Shed
Small Shed
The buildings etc. in Kaghai Nos 9 & 10 are of course drawn too large in comparison to the areas of the Fields in Nos 2 & 8; actually they left ample room for Fields in Nos 9 & 10, but had become more scattered when those Fields became exhausted

FIGURE 6
PARISH MAP OF HANDAWADA

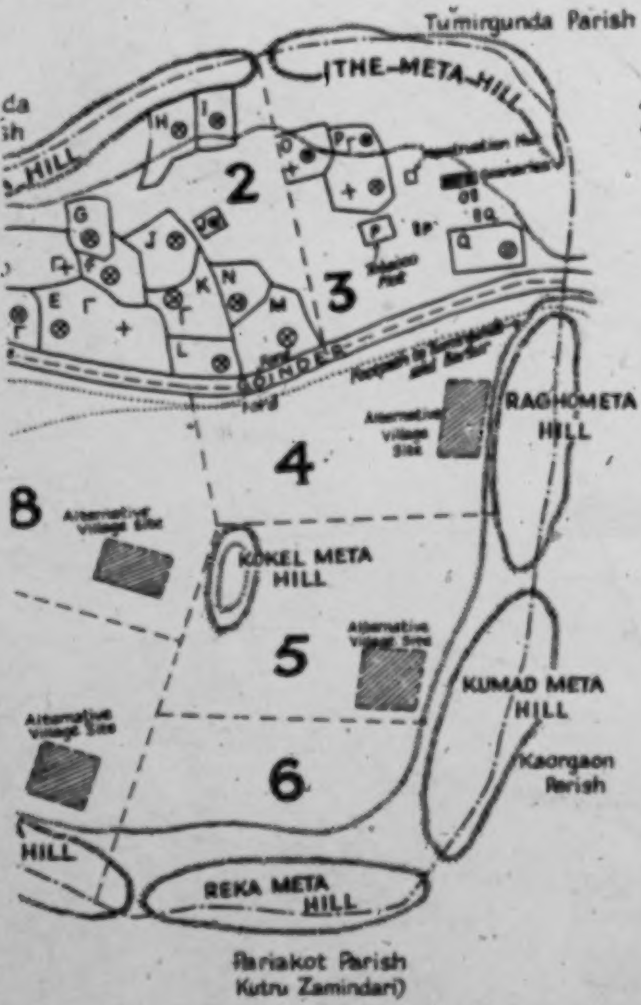
[p. 108(A)]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32

Hill Maria

361
241
621
427


Tumirgunda Parish
ITHE-META-HILL
da
sh
HILL
H
I
D
Pr
Q
2
3
4
5
6
8
G
J
E
F
K
L
M
N
P
OQ
EQ
EP
INDER
RAGHOMETA HILL
Alternative Village Site
KOKEL META HILL
Alternative Village Site
Alternative Village Site
Alternative Village Site
KUMAD META HILL
Kaorgaon Parish
HILL
REKA META HILL
Pariakot Parish
Kutru Zamindari)

5,

1

[illegible]

OF HANDAWADA

[p. 108(B)]

361 from the fresh cultivation site, postponed till after the first harvest
has been raised on the latter. This is inconvenient only to the
241 women, as from the time when the new *kosra* comes into ear till
621 the harvest is over all the men sleep apart from their wives in their
fields, while their womenfolk have to sleep in the village, it being
[834 taboo for women to sleep in the fields and to have sexual intercourse
513] during this period. As it was inconvenient for the bachelors to sleep in the dormitory (*gotul-lon*) on the hill-top village in Ahekele *paghai*, a temporary dormitory had been made near the river, actually in Ahekele *kaghai* no. 10, but close to the bridge by which the villagers crossed the river to their *penda* fields in Kawar *kaghai*; and there were also four houses there, and a row of granaries, that site having been more convenient for some of the villagers whose fields had been on the lower slopes of *kaghai* no. 10 when that was being cultivated. Handawada is a village of the Gume clan; and all the houses in the village on Ahekele *paghai*, those by the river in *kaghai* no. 10, and the one advance-guard house in Kawar *paghai*, as well as all the *penda* fields in Kawar *kaghai* no. 1, belonged to members of the Gume clan: but in the small Irpmeta *kaghai* no. 3 three families of the Tamo clan, with which the Gume clan may intermarry, had been allowed to have *penda* cultivation and to build houses and granaries; the wives had all been Gume girls. In the new village site, Kawar *paghai*, one villager had already built his house, to which I referred above as the advance-guard house, because he had been sent to make an experimental *penda* field in Kawar *kaghai* no. 1 a year in advance of the rest of the villagers, in accordance with custom; on the success of this experimental cultivation depends the villagers' decision whether to migrate *en masse* in the following year. There was also a newly made cairn close by where a ceremony in honour of the Village Mother had been performed as an essential preliminary to the shifting of the village. When I next camped in the parish in March 1934, the villagers had for three years occupied Kawar *paghai*, and the houses were dirty and smoke-blackened; the villagers had found the site feverish and unhealthy owing to its proximity to the river, there had been several deaths, and Kawar *kaghai* nos. 1 and 2 had each been exhausted in two years. Their Tamo relatives had exhausted Irpmeta *kaghai* and left the parish. The *Bhum-gaita* and another villager had been sent ahead to make experimental *penda* plots in Hitangpal *kaghai* (no. 4), and the villagers proposed to shift the village during 1935 to the village site in that *kaghai* or the adjacent Kurmelnar *kaghai* (no. 5); the experiments in Hitangpal had succeeded, and the villagers were to start their *penda* felling in a few days.

166 When shifting is to begin, all the parish lands being lands of
361 the clan, the *wadda'i* or priest of the clan-god is usually consulted; he is generally himself the *leski* or medium whom the god possesses,
787 and if the god through him directs that the village should be shifted,
791 he leads the villagers to the new site; sometimes the *wadda'i*
778 himself is not a medium, but keeps a *leski* as an assistant. At the new site the *kasyeq-gaita* clears a small patch of ground in honour of the Village Mother, and on this offers an egg, some grain and flowers in her name, over which he places stones in a basketry cylinder or as a cairn. This will remain as her shrine in the new village, sometimes, as we have seen, inside the dormitory fencing, sometimes outside it but in the main village street, or sometimes right outside the village in a grove, a shed being erected over it. The removal of the cairn would be an omen of disaster, only to be avoided by shifting the village. The Orcha villagers had only a small table-stone at the foot of a *saja* tree in a grove to mark their Village Mother. Handawada, besides a cairn, had a forked stick of *saja* wood oiled and polished, and whipped round the fork with *kosa* silk whipping, with a leaning thatched roof to protect her from the elements. Whatever form her shrine or representation may take, it is left behind when the village is deserted, and not shifted to the new village; for it is regarded as valuable evidence of the clan or parish property in the land. The only things removed are the pots in which grain, etc., is cooked at the Mother's feasts,
[784] the cooking utensils and the knives, which the *kasyeq-gaita* or religious headman must himself carry under his arm, *not* on his head, which is taboo, to the shed erected to house them near the Mother's shrine in the new village.

361 In the villages which I have seen being shifted, the earliest
166 buildings to be erected have been the village dormitory, the houses of the 'advance guard', the religious and the secular headmen, and the menstruation hut. Villagers often put up their pig-sties before their own houses. A temporary dormitory is often put up to house the bachelors, and replaced after the houses have been built by a more permanent and elaborate structure.

The villagers remove all their utensils and household goods from their old to their new houses when the village is shifted. But they move no building materials; they leave the deserted houses to the mercy of the elements, which means that they are soon choked in the mass of high grass and scrub jungle that immediately springs up on the deserted site, and probably burnt down when the forest undergrowth is fired in the following spring.

[text continues on p.112]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32

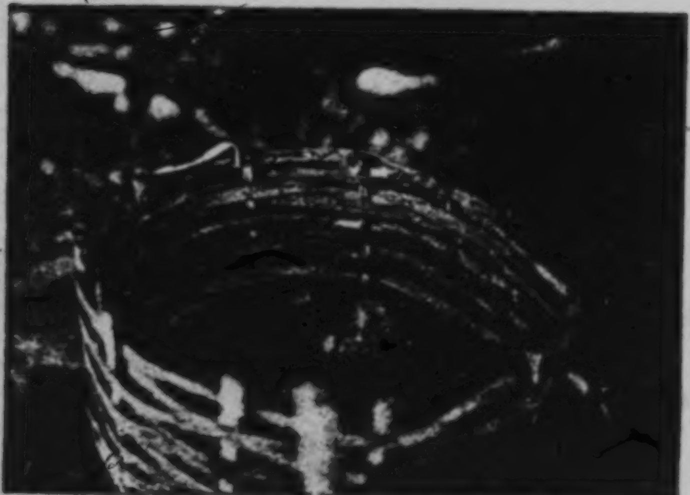
Hill Maria

778

343

THE VILLAGE MOTHER'S SHRINE AT ORCHA

The stone at the foot of the *saja* tree trunk on the right is the Village Mother; the shed contains her cooking pots, utensils, etc.



THE VILLAGE MOTHER AT HANDAWADA

consisting of an oiled forked *saja* stick, bound with *kosa* silk. The lean-to thatched roof was removed to enable the photograph to be taken

[Facing p. 110]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

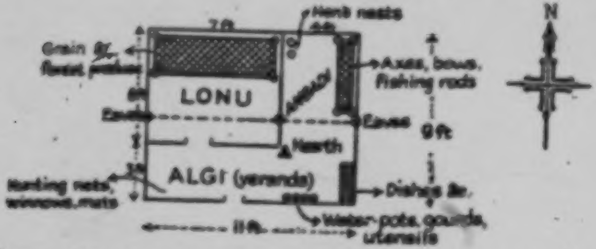
AW32 Gond AW32

Hill Maria

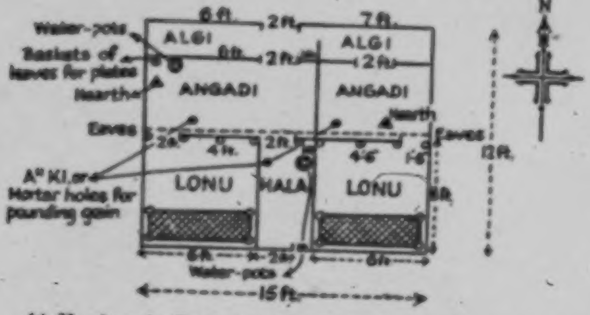
342

HILL MARIA HOUSES

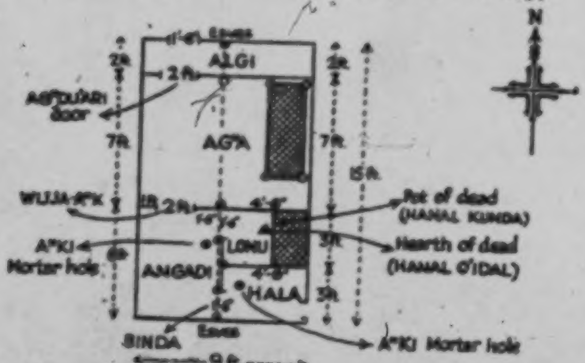
(*a*) Nugur, Kutru Mar, Kasyoq-gaita's house, Nov. 1927


Herb nests
7 ft.
Grain &c.
forest produce
LONU
Eaves
Eaves
Hearth
ALGI (veranda)
Hunting nets, winnows, mats
Axes, bows, fishing rods
9 ft.
Dishes &c.
Water-pots, gourds, utensils
11 ft.
N

(*b*) Kurmer, Chhota Dongar Mar, house of Dedha Keye, wife, 2 children, and extra rooms for widowed mother, Feb. 1930


6 ft.
2 ft.
7 ft.
Water-pots
ALGI
ALGI
Baskets of leaves for plates
6 ft.
2 ft.
2 ft.
Hearth
ANGADI
ANGADI
Hearth
Eaves
Eaves
2 ft.
4 ft.
2 ft.
4'6"
1'6"
A'' KI, or Mortar holes for pounding grain
LONU
HALA
LONU
8 ft.
12 ft.
6 ft.
2 ft.
6 ft.
Water-pots
15 ft.
N

(*c*) Handawada, Dantewara Mar, Peda's house, March 1934


1'-6" Eaves
2 ft.
ALGI
2 ft.
2 ft.
ASPDUARI door
7 ft.
AGA
7 ft.
15 ft.
WIJJA-ETK
1 ft.
2 ft.
4'-6"
1'6"
Pot of dead (HANAL KUNDA)
A''KI Mortar hole
LONU
3 ft.
Hearth of dead (HANAL O'IDAL)
6 ft.
ANGADI
4'-6"
HALA
3 ft.
1'6"
BINDA
Eaves
A''KI Mortar hole
9 ft.
N

The shaded portions are cots (ALPANJI). The dotted lines represent line of roof-trees

FIGURE 7

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

Houses

342 Rough ground-plans of three typical Hill Maria houses are given in the illustration on page 111. The Nugur house was the end house of a long-house, and faced south on to the main village street. It differs from the other two in having no partition wall between the veranda (*algi*) and the *angadi*, or women's kitchen and sleeping room; the *angadi* in this case is in fact almost a continuation of the veranda round the eastern side of the *lonu*. The husband actually slept in the veranda and his wife in the *angadi* in warm weather, but in the *lonu* in winter and rains. This house had no *hala* or menstruation room, because the village had a communal menstruation hut; so also the house had no back door.

The Kurmer house faced north on to the main street, and was the central house of a long-house of three houses; its western and eastern walls were thus only partitions separating it from the other two houses. It was itself almost two houses, as the widowed mother [592] of Dedha Keye, the occupant, had the eastern *algi*, *angadi* and *lonu* for her exclusive use; but there was no door between her portion of the *algi* and Keye's portion, only a partial continuation across the veranda of the partition wall between her and Keye's rooms. The widow was too old to need a *hala*, and so there was only one for Keye's wife in his part of the house, and this had a back door. Like the Nugur house, this house had no *agha* room.

The Handawada secular headman's (*peda's*) house was at the north end of a long-house containing three houses and facing west on to the village street; the other two houses had their verandas (*algi*) and entrances on the street side, facing west. His *algi* was therefore very small, and only nominally walled off from the open [351] ground to the north of the house by a bamboo wicker-work fence about 3½ feet high, being thus useless for keeping property. Where, as in the other houses illustrated, the veranda is in front of the house and parallel to the roof-tree, it is easy to construct a front wall as high as the roof, which is there barely 3½ feet above the ground.

342 The *agha* is the husband's living and sleeping room, and it is taboo (*polo*) for his wife, a mature daughter or any woman to sleep
513 in it; but boys too small to sleep in the bachelors' dormitory and
784 immature daughters may sleep there. In hot weather the males of the family often sleep under the granary, which is built on piles, and when houses have no *agha* this is the usual sleeping place at all times for the men of the family, and for male guests except when the latter can be accommodated in the village dormitory
342 (*gotal-lon*). It is strictly taboo for any female to enter a granary,
513 or to sleep under one. Every *agha* has a large *alpenji* or sleeping

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

platform raised above the ground on wooden legs about 3 feet high, 342
and consisting of a rectangular wooden frame from 5 to 7 feet long 513
by from 5 to 3 feet broad; no attempt has been made to draw to scale those shown in the three house plans. On this frame is a [824]
framework of criss-cross strips of bamboo bark or *siari* (*Bauhinia vahlii*) creeper cords. In dry weather the father and children sleep on the floor, with possibly a reed sleeping-mat (*masni*) or a bark-cloak (*taghali*) beneath them, and a fire near by; in the rainy season they sleep on the *alpanji* platform, with a fire underneath them. At other times of year it is a convenient shelf for storing baskets and basketry materials, winnows, tools, cords, etc. Where, as in the Kurmer house illustrated, there is no *agha*, the husband may sleep on the floor of the veranda in dry weather, and in wet weather on a sleeping-mat in the *angadi*, while the wife sleeps on the floor of the *lonu*.

The *angadi* is primarily the kitchen and secondarily the sleeping
room of the wife and any mature daughter. Besides one or more [354]
hearths (*o'idal*) of baked mud, roughly horseshoe shaped, or consisting of three stones, there are one or more mortar holes (*akki*)
sunk in the floor and carefully plastered with mud in which grain [252]
is pounded with the club-shaped pestle (*uspal*), and numerous pots or gourd bottles of water, supplies of leaves for leaf-plates, bamboo splinters for stitching them together and baskets of all shapes
and sizes. It is taboo for mature women to sleep anywhere except [784]
on the floor, and so no *alpanji* is provided in *angadi* or *hala* room. Actually the original custom, still followed in some remote villages, seems to have been for all men to sleep in the village dormitory, or at least under their granaries, and not in the house, save in the season when they slept in the fields; for this reason the Kurmer house without any *agha* probably is an older type than the Handawada. At present, except during the season when all males are
sleeping in the field houses, married men as well as bachelors sleep [834]
in the village dormitory whenever sexual continence has to be observed, e.g. from the night before the sowing of the *penda* fields till the first blades sprout, and before certain ceremonies.[a] The
Hill Marias are still doubtful about the propriety of men sleeping [833]
in the house and regard the jungle or some place overshadowed by the thick leaves of the *siari* (*Bauhinia vahlii*) creeper as the right place for intercourse between man and wife; but the old prejudice is fast dying out.[1]

---

[1] Russell and Hiralal (article, 'Gond', III, 131-2) write:—'In one part
of Bastar they have a curious rule that all males, even the married, must sleep 834
in the common house for the eight months of the open season, while their
wives sleep in their own houses. A Maria Gond thinks it impious to have 833
sexual intercourse with his wife in his house, as it would be an insult to the

[a] [see cat.116, p.420.—Analyst]

000 The essential features of the *hala* or menstruation room have already been described.

Although also used for storing provisions and goods, the *lonu*
778 room is essentially the room devoted to the Departed (*Hanal*), and
342 is, indeed, often referred to as the *Hanal Kholi*, or Room of the
Departed. Here in a corner rests the *Hanal Kunda* or Pot of the
—784 Departed, which it is taboo for the husband to touch, and in which
769 the housewife deposits a little meal for the departed ancestors
whenever she grinds; and here is the *Hanal O'idal*, or the Hearth of the Departed, on which she cooks the first new grain at each of the new grain eating festivals; the ashes of this are never swept away. There is never a back door to the *lonu*. As no space should be wasted, there is always an *alpanji* platform in the *lonu* for storing provisions, especially jungle produce; but it is never slept on, as women only may sleep in the *lonu*, and it is taboo for them to sleep anywhere except on the floor.

342 The walls of houses are generally made of vertical pole stockading. The side walls are of poles of a uniform height of from 3 to 3½ feet, while the end walls start from this height at the sides and rise to 6 or 7 feet at the centre; the latter at intervals have forked tops to support the horizontal beams parallel to the sides on which the thatched roof rests. There are generally three of these on either side of the central and highest beam, which is the roof-tree. The roof-tree is supported at intervals along its length by other fork-topped poles resting in the ground, generally built into the partitions between the rooms, or serving as posts for the inside doors, and varying accordingly in number. They are shown on the three ground-plans on page 111 in small circles along the dotted line representing the line of the roof-tree; that dotted line in the Kurmer and Handawada plans should correspond with the partitions shown closely parallel to them. The inner partitions, including those dividing one house in a long-house from another,

---

834 goddess of wealth who lives in the house, and the effect would be to drive
her away. Their solicitude for this goddess is the more noticeable, as the
Maria Gond's house and furniture probably constitute one of the least valuable
833 human habitations on the face of the globe.'

Whoever gave the authors this information must have been drawing on his imagination. There is no 'goddess of wealth' among the Marias. The modern Maria becomes hilarious over the idea that it is in any way wrong to have intercourse with his wife in the house; if any consideration deterred the older generation, it was the close proximity of the *hanal kunda* (Pot of the Departed) in the *lonu* room of the house, so associated with the cult of the *hanal* or Departed.

Dr. Hutton has referred me to the account of the Kadar tribe of Cochin
171 (*Census of India*, 1931, Vol. I, Pt. III, p. 214). The Kadar also regard (or used to regard) it as taboo to have sexual intercourse in the house, but husband and wife meet by day at a trysting place in the forest.

are made either of similar but lighter pole stockading, or of what 342 the Hill Marias call *tum*, that is, fencing of grass fastened in vertical bundles between pairs of horizontal bamboo struts, which themselves are fastened at intervals to poles planted in the ground. The floors, walls and partitions are plastered with mud, the walls on the inside, and the partitions on both sides; the women do the plastering, while their men look on. They often do not plaster the veranda wall at all. They sometimes make the side walls of bamboo wattlework instead of pole stockading. They do not char or otherwise treat the bases of the poles before fixing them in the ground. The first post of the house is almost always of the [778 sacred *saja* tree; I have not seen this adorned with bundles of thatching grass in the manner of other Gonds (cf. Russell and 824] Hiralal, III, p. 122), but I have seen two *saja* trees near a house under construction so adorned. The youths sometimes paint the plastered partitions in white with rows of dots, with swastikas like [531] those tattooed on girls' faces (see p. 74 above), or with crude crocodiles or tigers; I have seen women's breasts represented in relief.

The grass (rarely palm) thatch rests on bamboos tied across the roof beams, and is secured against wind by bamboos criss-crossed outside the thatch. The grass generally used is *dab* (*Pollinea* [824] *argentea*) which appears in the *penda* fields after the first harvest has been reaped, and in the second or third year covers them so thickly that they have to be abandoned. In March, after the harvest has been finished, you will see near all the recently abandoned *penda* clearings extensive *dab* cuttings, the grass being stacked on rough log platforms about a foot and a half above the ground in [417] readiness for re-thatching the houses just before the break of the monsoon. The men re-thatch houses, granaries, pig-sties and temples every year.

The usual form of door is a rectangle of split bamboo wickerwork sliding between two pairs of upright wooden posts. The doorway has often a wicker-work threshold from one to two feet high, over which the sliding door fits. There are always doors in the doorways leading from outside into the veranda, from the veranda to the *angadi*, and at the back of the menstruation room; generally also in the doorways leading into the *lonu*; but I have never seen a door in the front doorway of the menstruation room. Sometimes the whole of this room is not taboo to men, the *binda* or mud threshold that marks the limit of the tabooed ground (see p. 106) being constructed across the floor of the room some two feet beyond the front entrance. Occasionally more elaborate doors will be seen, made of a small hewn wooden plank with tangs of wood left

342 projecting about two inches at the top and bottom of the inner edge, to work in the eyes of staples cut out of wood and fastened into the door-post; the other end has a roughly squared strip of wood six inches long, which rests in a slot in the opposite door-post and is fastened to it by a horizontal peg passing through holes in the door-post and the strip of wood.

422 The contents of the Kurmer house represented in ground-plan (b) on page 111 were typical of Hill Maria houses; the list that follows enumerates the contents only of the rooms occupied by Dedha Keye himself, his wife and children; his mother had her own property in her own *angadi* and *lonu* :—

VERANDA

1 sambar horn used as a peg.
1 *taghali* bark overcoat.
4 bundles of firewood.
[824] 1 broom of *phulbehari* (*Thysanolaena agrostis*) grass.

ANGADI

2 earthen cooking pots.
10 gourd ladles.
5 gourds for making bottles.
2 earthen pots full of drinking water.
1 bow.
2 arrows.
3 axes.
1 broken axe.
1 bamboo tobacco tube.
1 pair wooden clogs.
3 small wooden sitting stools.
4 coils of dried *siari* bark for twisting into twine.
1 bundle of peacock's feathers, and 2 cock feathers.
4 *reking* bamboo and leaf rain-hats.
1 *dala'ino* leaf rain-shield for the back.
3 small iron sickles.
2 baskets of leaves for plates, etc.
29 baskets of various types, mostly empty, but some containing meal grain and forest fruits.

MENSTRUATION ROOM

(*a*) *Outside the taboo limit*
2 *uspal*, or grain pestles.
2 winnows.
1 shouldered digging iron (*pulu*).
1 *gudari* hoe.
2 arrows.

(*b*) *Inside the taboo limit*
1 hearth.
1 cooking pot.
1 axe.
1 *uspal*.
2 gourd water-bottles.
1 *phulbehari* broom
2 bamboo tubes of oil.
8 baskets of different sizes, used for storing food, leaves, etc., when the room is in occupation.

Loru 422

1 *alpenji* platform for storing produce.
10 large baskets, containing grain and forest fruits.
1 blue dancing skirt or *hechi*.
5 gourd bottles.
1 axe.
2 sickles.
4 large earthenware pots.
1 ditto, used as *Hanal Kunda*.
1 hearth, used as *Hanal O'idal*.
3 very small earthenware pots of pigs' fat.
6 thick bamboo oil-tubes.

Most houses have, besides these, a number of drums, more bows and arrows, fishing-rods, lines and hooks, snares, nets of varying mesh for fish, birds and animals, throwing spears, fibre for making string and rope, hemp or grass for the same purpose, sandals of raw cow-hide, thongs of cow-hide, and *korr-guda*, or funnel-shaped hen's nests on bamboo posts about two feet high. They keep the bulk [251] of their grain and forest fruits in their granaries, and the baskets in the house contain only what has been removed from the granary for current consumption; there are generally to be found quantities of new baskets made for sale at the bazaar. The baskets are of all [285] shapes and sizes, and amongst other items include flat baskets something like winnows for use as platters, which they hold up full of food to their mouths.

Granaries

The granaries, whether built singly or in a long row, are almost 343 invariably built on piles, the floor being 3 or 3½ feet above the ground. This not only protects the grain and dried fruit stored in the granary from damp and white ants, but, as already remarked, provides an extra sleeping place for the males of the family and any male guests. There are three rows of piles, the two outer ones being tree trunks, seven or eight feet high, cut with a piece of a bough forking off at the floor height and trimmed short as a rest for the horizontal beams which support the flooring; the central piles have similar forks turned inwards at floor-height to support the floor beams, but are two or three feet higher above the floor than the outer piles, as they have to support the roof-tree. The upper ends of these long piles are either naturally forked or else notched to support the horizontal roof beams, which bear a thatched roof constructed in the same way as the roofs of dwelling-houses. Planks are laid across the floor beams at the points where these rest on the lower forks of the piles, and a flooring of bamboo wicker-work is laid on them. The walls are made of bamboo check wicker-work, the wefts being carried on around each corner of the building, where a thin pole resting on a floor plank forms the corner warp; the other warps are unsplit bamboos, but

343 the wefts are of split bamboo. The corners of the walls are further secured by cords stitched through the two wicker walls round the corner warp and the corner pile. Wherever beams cross, they are [283] lashed with *siari* twine or thicker rope. The door of a single granary is usually a sliding piece of bamboo wicker-work; but in the long granaries it is a section of *tum* grass fence or bamboo wicker-work fastened in position by obliquely crossing bamboos.

251 These granaries contain immense quantities of *kosra* and other hill grains, rice, beans, dried forest fruits, etc., in big bins of bamboo basketry, smaller baskets, and large *chiptis* or lidded boxes of leaves on a framework of cane or twigs. The bins are all lidded with stitched-leaf tops, tied round the rim with creeper cord, like the paper top of an English jam-jar. The Marias store here also dried rolls of tobacco leaves, coils of creeper and other ropes, and gourds of all shapes and sizes for making spoons, ladles and water-bottles; and when they used *moghi* dancing shields and peacock plumes attached to them they used to hang them under the eaves except when they wrapped them in leaves and hung them in the tops of trees.

The 'gotul-lon'

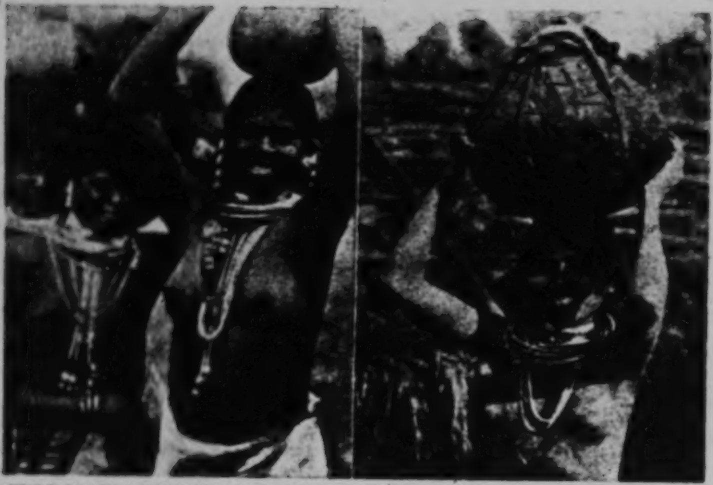
342 513 The village dormitory, as has been said above, is generally in the centre and at one end of the village street. It is a long-house made with no partitions, surrounded generally with a bamboo wattle-work fence; and it is practically a roofed *alpanji* or sleeping platform, the criss-cross bamboo framework of which covers almost the whole floor at a height of about 2½ feet above the floor. Often it is entered from in front by a door under the highest point of the eaves, to which access is gained by a narrow horizontal gangway of logs raised the same height above the ground as the sleeping platform and extending from the outer fence to the door; persons entering the dormitory climb on to the gangway by a rough stile, consisting of a tree stump set in the ground between two vertical posts which serve as railings. [374] The interior is badly grimed with smoke, as log fires are lit at night under the sleeping platform, the only door is fastened, and there is no window or vent for the escape of smoke. I have never found anything inside a dormitory except two or three drums and occasionally the shrine of the Village Mother.

B. Bison-horn Maria Villages, Houses, and their Contents

361 Of Hill Maria villages the essential thing to remember is that they shift as the cultivation shifts, and so seldom remain more than four or five years in one place. The few villages that have good permanent rice fields tend now to become more or less permanent.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

PLATE XI



482
142
291
301
415

HILL MARIA WOMEN CARRYING GOURDS OF WATER

HILL MARIA WOMAN CARRYING A LEAF-BOX OF GRAIN

(Photographs by Baron E. von Eichstedt)

361
342

BISON-HORN MARIA VILLAGE STREET, TELAM, NEAR KATAKALIAN

[facing p. 118]

361 The population is comparatively small, and the land available for
[423] the shifting *penda* cultivation is very extensive. There is practically
no individual property in *penda* land, and it is recognized only in
permanent rice fields.

In comparison, the Bison-horn Maria country is thickly
361 populated; there is far more permanent rice cultivation; much
241 old *penda* land has lost its forest growth, or is getting steadily
slower in recuperating it after each time when it is felled and burnt
178 for *penda* cultivation; and each villager likes to have a large *bari*
621 or garden enclosure at the back of his house or in the immediate
neighbourhood of the village where he can grow tobacco, maize, chillies, tomatoes and sesamum, and can pen his cattle for the sake of their manure. In consequence, economic considerations now operate in favour of the permanency of Bison-horn Maria villages and against their being shifted; as the pressure on the land has become greater the alternative sites (*padar*), to which in past generations a village was from time to time shifted, have been permanently occupied by hamlets (*para*) of that village, and the settlers in the hamlets have permanently occupied the adjacent *penda* sites once cultivated in rotation by the shifting village. Many big Bison-horn villages have six or seven hamlets, some of which are virtually separate villages, and are beginning to assert a separate identity by having their own headmen and sometimes their own village priests, though on formal occasions all will still gather together at the original *padar* of the village and its hamlets, and acknowledge there the authority of the headman and priest of the parent village. In the Abujhmar hills, moreover, each village is still inhabited almost entirely by members of one clan, and all the lands of the villages are regarded as the lands of the clan. But in the Bison-horn country, though each parish is still said to be the *bhum* (earth) of the clan which first settled there, yet there are generally in the village many houses of other clans and wife-clans, from whom the first settlers and their descendants have taken
wives. Though they will still say that a certain village is the *bhum*
[423] of the clan that founded it, yet in consequence of the many representatives of other clans settled there now the village and its lands are not looked on as that clan's property in anything like the same degree as among the Hill Marias, nor in actual fact is the original clan so free to shift the village as it was before it allowed its wife-clans to share its village site and cultivable lands. Often, too, the headman is no longer a member of the settler clan. If,
[166] therefore, a Bison-horn village does shift in these days, the move
is probably due to superstitious motives, or to epidemic or epizootic disease.

361 364 177 The villages being permanent in comparison to the Hill Maria villages, they are apt naturally to be considerably dirtier, and this is accentuated by the far larger numbers of cattle and goats that the greater wealth of the Bison-horn Marias enables them to keep. The houses, too, are far dirtier and more smoke-grimed, though in places the Hindu practice of constantly replastering the floors with fresh cow-dung is coming in. They are smaller also, as the spread of cultivation has restricted the available sources of timber and bamboo; but where ample forest is near, the houses are larger, and sleeping sheds for the men as well as cattle byres make individual homesteads appear larger than the homes of the Hill Marias.

342 361 The long-houses of the Hill Marias are never seen in the Bison-horn Maria villages. Individualism is becoming yearly more marked among the Bison-horn Marias, and every man likes to have his own house and property distinct from his brothers and cousins. Their houses, instead of being parallel to the village street are generally at right angles to it, and a double row of houses, one on each side of the street, is often impossible, because the houses are too close to each other to allow each house to have its *bari* (garden enclosure) behind it, so that some householders (like those of houses B and E in the rough sketch of part of Telam village on page [351] 121) must have their *bari* opposite them across the street. Each *bari* is fenced right round with bamboo wattle-work, so that the fences of the *baris* opposite the line of houses appear like a continuous wattle-work wall along one side of the street. But there may be in the middle of the street occasional granaries or other buildings, and the houses are often irregularly scattered about with no pretence of formal alignment, so that the ordered arrangement of a Hill Maria village is completely absent. [231] There are as many pig-sties in Bison-horn as in Hill Maria villages, but they are far less elaborately and adequately constructed, though protected, like the Hill Maria sties, by leaning thatches from the sun.

361 The houses of the clan that founded the village are usually all together in one group, and there are separate groups for each of the clans with which it intermarries.

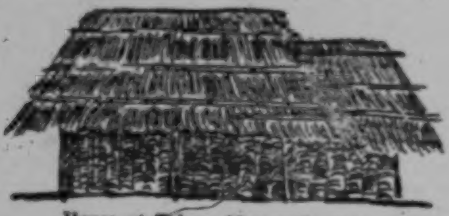
343 841 There appears to be no common menstruation hut among the Bison-horn Marias, nor, indeed, any special menstruation room in their houses. A special hut or booth is erected near the house for the delivery of a child, and in a few villages near the borders of the Hill Maria country there is a hut called the *Piki-kurma* for each group of houses, where apparently young girls are segregated for their first menstruation; but I noted that I might have misunderstood the information that I was given about this hut, and in villages in the heart of the Bison-horn country was definitely told

[text continues on p. 122]

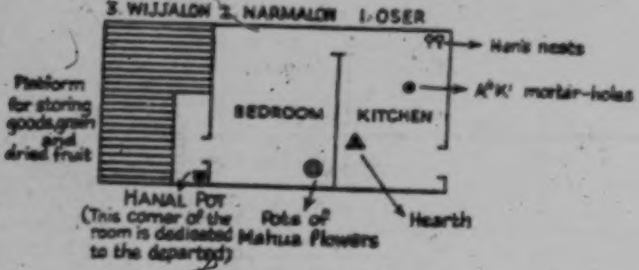
PLATE XII

BISON-HORN MARIA VILLAGE AND HOUSE

342

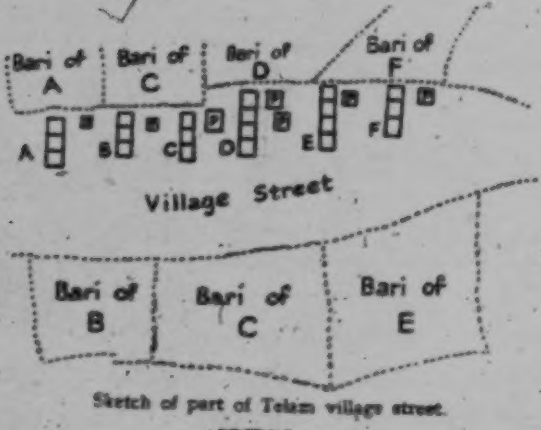


House at Telam, May 11th, 1930.


3. WIJJALON
2. NARMALON
1. OSER
Haris nests
A°K' mortar-holes
Platform for storing goods, grain and dried fruit
BEDROOM
KITCHEN
HANAL POT (This corner of the room is dedicated to the departed)
Pots of Mahua Flowers
Hearth

Rough ground-plan of house.

361


Bari of A
Bari of C
Bari of D
Bari of F
A
B
C
D
E
F
Village Street
Bari of B
Bari of C
Bari of E

Sketch of part of Telam village street.

KEY

▣ = Pig-sty

☐ = House

----- = Bamboo wattlework fence

343 841 that there was no custom of segregating menstruating girls or women.

There is in every Bison-horn village a *paik-gotul* or lodging-hut
342 for State officials, but I have never seen a *gotul-lon* dormitory for
bachelors. I was once told that there are such dormitories in a few big villages such as Ghotpal, Karli, Tumnar, Massenar and Dugeli, but could not find one in these villages; nor did the State officials who gathered information for me in various parts of the Bison-horn country ever report their existence. The *padas* (headmen) and *permas* (village priests) whom I saw at Aranpur and other camps stated that such dormitories were a degraded institution found only among Hill Marias and Murias. They are not mentioned by Madras writers on the Koyas and Dorlas.

361 Bison-horn villages are not found on the tops of hills and
isolated spurs like Hill Maria villages. They are located in positions
convenient for communications, water supply or cultivation, like
lowland villages in all countries. Many of them, especially in
[487] the Jagdalpur tahsil, have cart tracks leading to them, though these
are used mainly by the Hindu and Mohammedan traders who bring
443] their wares to the various weekly markets already established
in their bigger villages. Though, however, some Bison-horn Marias
[492] have carts, and more keep cattle and do not always leave it to the
Rawat herdsman servant to milk them, while many use ploughs,
yet the majority of them still think it not the thing for Koitor to
drive carts, or that they could never manage them; and there are,
therefore, very many villages approachable only by footpaths.
[491] They make bridges very similar to those of the Hill Marias, often
on a more elaborate scale.

Shifting villages

361 787 166 The only Bison-horn Maria village where I could find memory of a fairly recent shifting was Bare Gudra, in the Kuakonda *pargana* of Dantewara tahsil. My informant was Kartami Mukka, the old village priest (*perma*) of the village, who said that when he was young the village was settled in the now abandoned Mundi *padar* (village site); there was heavy mortality from epidemic and epizootic outbreaks for some years, and a series of crop failures. Then the eggs in his father's house began always to get addled, and his father, the *perma*, interpreting this as a final intimation that the village had to be shifted, called up the elders to see the eggs, and they agreed that the village must be shifted. They had then, on a Monday, Wednesday or Friday, to go at noon with the *perma* to select the *padar* for the new village; and to test the omens at the new *padar* the *perma* dug a small hole in the ground. In the first hole he found a root growing across the hole, and so changed to another position

in the same *padar*, and here he was able to dig a hole without any 361
root growing across it; a few roots at the side of the hole did not
matter, and the finding of a stone when the hole was half dug was 787
considered lucky. In this hole he planted a pole of *saja* wood with
a forked top, to one arm of which he had tied a bundle of thatching 166
grass, and after filling in the hole around it with earth he sprinkled
some grains of rice in two heaps in front of the pole in the name of
the Village Mother, the clan-god and the local spirits. The next
morning he came with the elders to inspect the two heaps of grain,
and as he found them scattered about, he had to dig a fresh hole
exactly as before, plant the *saja* pole in it, and lay two heaps of
grain again in front of it. Next morning they found the two heaps
undisturbed, and so considered that the omens favoured this as
the village site. The *saja* pole was left there to serve as one of the
supports for the roof-tree of the *perma's* house, and the building
of the new village was begun without further ceremony. Had
the heaps of grain been found again disturbed, they would have
decided against that *padar* and tested the omens in the same way
in another *padar*. A sacrifice to the Village Mother and the Earth [782]
(*Bhum*) had preceded the actual settling in the new site.

Houses

On page 121 are a rough sketch and ground-plan of a
typical Bison-horn Maria house in the village of Telam in Kuakonda 342
pargana. The inner house, consisting of the *wijja-lon*
('seed-house') in the rear, and the *narma-lon*
('middle house') in front of it, is made first; and then the *oser*
('veranda') is added, with slightly lower eaves. Though from
indoors the *oser* seems just an integral part of the house, the different
levels of the eaves make the house look from the outside like two
card houses built on different levels. Sometimes also a second or
even a third *oser* has subsequently been built on to the first, each
with lower eaves, increasing still further the card house appearance.
The thatch is of forest grasses or of the dwarf palms (*Phoenix* [824]
sylvestris and *Phoenix farinifera*) which are such common features
of the undergrowth of the Bastar forests, and is neater than the
thatch of Hill Maria houses. The doors are usually pieces of
bamboo wicker-work sliding between pairs of vertical posts, like the
doors of the Hill Maria houses; but sometimes the sections of
wicker-work are hinged on to a doorpost by knotted pieces of split
bamboo. In the richer and more advanced villages, wooden doors
and padlocks are not unknown.

The *wijja-lon*, like the Hill Maria's *lonu*, is used both as a store- 342
room and for the cult of the Departed. These being no pile granaries 251
~~or long~~ granaries, the year's harvest, not only of grain but also of
forest produce, is stored in the *wijja-lon*, and so a storage platform 769

342 251 [769] of logs covers nearly the whole of the room, except the dark corner where, as among the Hill Marias, rests the *Hanal Kunda* or Pot of the Departed. The various grains are stored in bamboo bins or in very large leaf-work *chiptis*. Other baskets contain dried mango pulp, fresh mangoes, mango kernels whole or crushed, the mousy smelling flowers of the *mahua* (*Bassia latifolia*), *mahua* seeds, and the fresh or dried fruits of the tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*), *seona* (*Gmelina arborea*), *achar* (*Buchanania latifolia*), *tendu* (*Diospyros melanoxylon*), *siari* (elephant creeper, *Bauhinia vahlii*), the various dwarf palms, and other trees. They store far more forest produce than the Hill Marias, but less grain; their *penda* slopes are [432] far less extensive, and, as copper coin circulates freely among them, they sell much more of their rice and garden produce. They do not use the various forest yams nearly as much as the Hill Marias.

342 [513] The *narma-lon* is a sleeping room for the women and small children, and household goods and utensils are kept there. In the *oser* is the cooking hearth, the *akhi* mortar holes in which grain is husked with the large *musal* pestle, very similar in type to the Hill Maria *uspal*, hen's nests, water-pots, leaves for plates, etc. [273] If any of the intoxicating *landa* gruel is under brew, it is kept usually in the cooler and darker *wijja-lon* or *narma-lon*. An interest- [415] ing utensil seen in many Bison-horn houses is a spoon of brass, like an English pipe with a straight stem, and an exact reproduction 326] in shape of the gourd ladles known in the hills as *paghas* and in the plains as *orka*, described on page 66 above. This is called a *kal-burria* or 'wine-ladle' and is used for distributing liquor. It is made by the Gharwa brass-workers by the *cire-perdue* process.

343 There are often side-sheds in which members of the family sleep, or where goats or kine are tethered at night, and poultry roost.

422 The other contents of their houses are similar to those of the Hill Maria houses, but they generally have more tools, weapons, hunting-nets, clothes and jewellery, owing to their growing habit of regular attendance at weekly bazaars and their greater readiness to sell their produce.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

CHAPTER VII

AGRICULTURE

THE whole life of the Maria is primarily directed towards the raising 241
of food from the earth, either by cultivation, or by gathering the
fruits of the forest, or by fishing, hunting or trapping. His agri-
culture, as we have seen, determines the sites of his villages, and
regulates his relations with his wife. His festivals, it will be seen,
are designed either to ensure the benevolence of the earth and the
ancestors and the clan-god towards the crops about to be sown,
or to celebrate the first eating of each of the main crops, and the
final harvest-home, in a spirit of communal thanksgiving. The
human population to him is the crop of men that the *Bhum* or
Earth raises for the clan, or for the Ruling Chief.

The Hill Maria still regards the crops as the result of the 241
combined labours of the village rather than of the labours of 476
individuals. If one suffers, all suffer, and all combine to support
the old and the needy, and to help each fellow villager to get 423
through the heaviest parts of the yearly agricultural round. The
young man on marriage, or the fellow clansman settling in the
village, must have his share of the village lands for cultivation.
In the raising of crops, then, the village and not the individual
cultivator is the unit, even now, in the Abujhmar hills. But the [177]
Bison-horn Maria is an individualist. He has lived long in contact
with semi-Hinduized neighbours, and has long begun to practise
the more advanced methods of the settled cultivator. Permanent
cultivation fosters individualism. Even in the Abujhmar hills the
few permanent rice fields are definitely the private property of
individuals; and as the use of the plough spreads and more and
more of the wet lands become permanent rice fields, the owners of
these fields begin more and more to assert in their shifting cultivation
plots the rights of permanent private ownership already admitted
in their rice fields. This has already happened among the Bison-
horn Marias, aided by the rapid growth of population increasing
the pressure on the land and reducing the land available for distribu-
tion to newcomers to the villages. The indications are that
formerly they shared the communal attitude of the Hill Maria.
In describing, therefore, the agricultural life of the community, 128
I shall deal primarily with that of the Hill Marias, indicating where
necessary the different developments among the Bison-horn Marias.

128 It will be convenient to describe here the religious ceremonies of the Hill Marias, so bound up are they with their agriculture; but as the agricultural ceremonies of the Bison-horn Marias are much more elaborate, it will be more appropriate to describe them in dealing with religion in Part IV. Unless, therefore, I state otherwise, the ceremonies mentioned in this chapter will be those of the Hill Marias only.

Systems of cultivation

241 In previous chapters, when speaking of the shifting cultivation of the Marias, the term which I have generally used is *penda*. Central Provinces literature has used the general terms *dahia* or *bewar* indiscriminately for all forms of cultivation in which crops are raised on the ashes of trees felled and burned for that purpose. In Bastar *dahi* is the Halbi term applied to the system of cutting trees or brushwood in the forest, and bringing them to an old unembanked field, where they are spread out to dry and then fired just before the rains break. Such fields are always level, and not hill slopes. The practice is known to the Hill and the Bison-horn Marias, and called *parka*; but as it is usually applied to old fields that have lain fallow (or occasionally to a rice field which is to be sown with a dry crop), the Hill Marias make little use of it, but will take more to it now that the substitution of a poll-tax for the former attempt to impose a regular land revenue settlement is encouraging them to re-cultivate old rice fields and to bring the flat *marhan* lands under cultivation. It can be seen in the villages between Orcha and Chhota Dongar, on the edge of the Hill Maria country, where the hills begin to open out into broad valleys.

Flat lands covered with forest growth which is cleared from time to time and burned for shifting cultivation are known in the Halbi language as *marhan*. The forest growth is felled *in situ* and spread out to dry in January or February; it is fired towards the end of May, and the ashes are spread evenly over the soil with an instrument like a squeegee with a handle eleven or twelve feet long, called *dosna-dang* in Halbi and *parka-lathi* by the Marias; as the name makes it clear, this is used for spreading the ashes in *parka* or *dahi* cultivation also. The ashes are ploughed into the ground after the first fall of rain. *Marhan* cultivation is called *dippa* by Murias and Hill Marias, and *erka* by the Bison-horn Marias, who subdivide it further into *mudur-erka* or timber forest *marhan*, and *marram-erka* or scrub-jungle *marhan*. These flat lands can be cultivated for only two years normally; in the first year the undergrowth is cut, the smaller trees and some boughs of big trees, while the big trees are girdled. To provide ashes for the second year, the big trees girdled the year before are felled, after piles of dry brushwood have been burnt round their feet if the girdling has not prevented some sap again rising. Ultimately, if these lands do not have a long enough rest between successive clearings, the forest loses its power of regeneration; and it is to such former *dippa* or *erka* lands that the *parka* or *dahi* system described above is applied. *Dippa* is fairly common between Orcha and Chhota Dongar, and it is because there is plenty of land still available to ensure each *dippa* an adequate rest that *parka* cultivation is so uncommon. But in the more open country of the large Bison-horn Maria villages much land seems to have lost its forest regenerative power, and every remaining non-fruit tree has its boughs lopped [313] year after year to provide fuel to be carted off to the old *erka* lands for *parka* cultivation till it looks, when its new leaves sprout, like a Lombardy poplar in shape. The raking of the ashes with the *parka-lathi* in the height of the hot weather is very exhausting, and the men who do this work often suffer for some days later from very dark-coloured urine.

Both *dippa* (*erka*) and *parka* are more advanced methods of cultivation than the Hill Maria's favourite *penda* or hill slope cultivation. For this he fells and burns the forest growth on the hill slopes, which are often very steep. Beyond roughly distributing the unburnt material over the slope, and, wearing wooden clogs or strips of *saja* bark to protect the soles of his feet, poking unburnt logs into a burning patch with long bamboo poles, he does not try to spread the ashes evenly, or use the *parka-lathi*, and consequently adjacent patches of crops vary greatly in height and density. He sows the seed broadcast in the ashes after the rains have broken, and does not attempt to dig up the soil of the slopes with his *gudari* hoe except in the few patches where the sown seed does not germinate; these he roughly scarifies and resows. The *Gazetteer* (p. 54) repeats the story that the seed is 'sown along the top of the slope from which the rain water washes it down and spreads it over the field'; the bare idea of this makes Hill and Bison-horn Maria laugh, and it is obvious that if sowing were so much left to chance, the only parts of the slope producing any crops would be the sides of the natural drainage channels. The Hill Maria does scarify his rare permanent rice fields and sometimes his *dippa* land with his hoe, and one man in three hundred may use a plough on them; but the Bison-horn Maria uses his plough on rice field, *parka* and *erka* and even occasionally on the lower and less steep parts of his *penda* slopes, while he scarifies with his hoe all that he does not plough.

In most Hill Maria parishes *penda* is the only kind of cultivation, and though in much of the Bison-horn country permanent

241 rice cultivation, semi-permanent *parka* fields, and the less ephemeral *erka* cultivation have displaced it, yet tracts remain like those round Katakalian and Kuakonda, from Paknar to Massenar, where *penda* still reigns supreme, and in late May hillside after hillside here is speckled grey with the fresh ashes of the newly burned timber, or there is dotted with the vivid green of the fresh undergrowth shooting up from the old roots and stumps which have somehow survived the last three years of fire and axe; hard by are patches of pole forest ready for their turn of *penda*, when the newly fired plots are exhausted. Though maps show such areas in the Bison-horn country as forest, they are really all cultivated areas, on which forest is grown in rotation with other crops as a source of fertilizing nitrates; and here every slope and every patch of forest has passed into the separate possession of individuals. The extent of *penda* cultivation in the Abujhmar hills is less apparent to the eye, as the population is far sparser and the parish lands far wider. The slopes successively cultivated get a longer fallow period, and are farther apart.

This shifting forest cultivation is criticized from two points of view. The forestry enthusiast laments the passing of much fine forest, and foretells desiccation and erosion. Others condemn *penda* as a lazy method of cultivation. The former forgets that in most of this area the forests have been too remote and inaccessible ever to be exploited, and that, even though some fine timber has been sacrificed, much that has gone was hopelessly over-mature. Vast areas of forest have been reserved by the State, and it has not been possible to work half of these reserves. The Maria does not range through his forests clearing patches for cultivation at random; he has more or less definite rotations, and the clearings after two or three years' cultivation may get twelve or fourteen years' rest, at the end of which they have a dense forest growth. Few signs are apparent of erosion, save in the more open parts of the Bison-horn country where *erka* has cleared the plains below the hills of forest; and there are no signs of any reduction in the heavy rainfall. In the remaining *penda* lands of the Bison-horn Marias no good timber is destroyed; whether these lands are at the moment growing grain or bush, they should now be regarded as lands under cultivation. The axe and fire of the *penda* cultivator have let light and civilization penetrate slowly but surely into the Bison-horn country as nothing else would have done for centuries; they alone have prevented the Abujhmar hills remaining a trackless wilderness.

It is a superficial criticism that condemns *penda* cultivation as lazy. The clearing of the land, especially if it be covered with heavy timber, is most arduous. Remote and sometimes almost perpendicular slopes two or three miles from the village have to be cleared; the wood and scrub spread over the ground, which, in the Bison-horn country, has beforehand been dug over with the hoe or, perhaps, on the lower and less steep slopes, ploughed with great difficulty; field-houses, sheds and watching platforms have to be built on the *penda* slopes. The firing of the *penda* is particularly arduous; the stumps have to be cleared of the shoots that spring up when the rains have set in; and where deer or bison are numerous the clearings have to be fenced with heavy timber fencing. Man and woman here have unaided to do all that regular plains cultivators do with the aid of ox and plough, and much more besides. They do not weed their crops, and they broadcast their seed; here alone they save labour which falls to the regular cultivator, not out of laziness, but from ignorance. 241

For convenience the names which the Hill Maria gives to the months may here be stated:— 805

	English	*Maria*
The cultivator's year	December-January	Pusi
	January-February	Mah
	February-March	Phagur
	March-April	Chaita
	April-May	Mur
	May-June	Na
	June-July	Ha'i
	July-August	Hagh
	August-September	Eranj
	September-October	Eram
	October-November	Orma
	November-December	Pa, or Pandi

The Bison-horn Maria uses generally the local Hindu names for the months. The calendar is, of course, lunar, the word *lenj* meaning either moon or month. Of the above names the first four are obvious corruptions of the Hindu names Pus, Magh, Phalgun and Chait. Mur is explained as meaning 'beginning'; 'to begin' is *mur kiyana*. Na is a shortened form of *nalung*, the numeral 4, Ha'i of *ha'ingu* (5), Hagh of *argu* (6), while the other four names are derived from forms akin to the Telugu words for 7, 8, 9 and 10, namely *eru* (7), *ermori* (8), *ormadu* (9) and *padu* (10); it is interesting to note that although ordinarily the Hill Maria, except on the southern edge of the Abujhmar hills, has Gondi forms only for numbers 1 to 6, and after that uses the Hindi numerals, in the nomenclature of the months he remembers Dravidian forms for numbers 7 to 10. He counts the year as beginning in Mur, though some will say Na. (The Bison-horn Maria uses the local Hindu names for the months.) But as the actual round of agricultural operations begins with the felling of trees for the coming *penda* 805 177 [80.2] 241 805

241
815
cultivation, it will be convenient to start this account from the new moon of Phagur, that is to say, the new moon nearest to the end of February, before which it is not considered right to start cutting forest for *penda*, though the work is started two or three weeks earlier for *dippa* cultivation. The choice of the *kaghai* site (see p. 107 above) for the *penda* will have been made beforehand, either in informal discussion among the village elders or at the ceremony after *Koqsar*, the great concluding harvest festival, at which the *kasyeq-gaita* seated on his *udam-garia* seat of honour with the villagers seated around him, confirms by formal pronouncement the decisions probably already reached in informal discussions with the elders about the village arrangements for the coming year.

241
Before the felling of the forest may begin, a further ceremony takes place. I attended the ceremony at Orcha on March 11th, 1934, when the moon of Phagur was nearly full. At about 1 p.m. the *kasyeq-gaita* with the elders proceeded to the selected *kaghai*, which was covered with a dense growth of sapling sal trees; the oldest villager present, a man of about fifty, said that he was a small child when it had last been cultivated. There Usendi Delu, the *kasyeq-gaita*, cleared a small piece of ground at the foot of a *saja* tree, set up a stone on it against a root of the tree, and placed an egg upright on its pointed end in front of the stone. He then squatted on the ground before the stone to the right of the egg, and Usendi Moda, the *gaita* or secular headman, to the left of the egg. Both put their hands together, palm to palm, touched the ground below the egg with them and raised them to their foreheads, uttering in unison the formula, '*Bhum kenji! Talugh kenji! Jimme jaga kenji! Anam pirka a'i, nehna nehna manna a'i! Kohla pandi! irka gumur hadi!*' (Earth hearken! Mother hearken! All that is here and around hearken! Let our crops and vegetables grow here, let them grow and yield full increase! Let our *kutki* ripen! Let our cucumbers and pumpkins mature!) They repeated the formula in unison, again saluted the earth in front of the egg, and then arose. The congregation of elders which had squatted around them and kept silence all through the ceremony also arose, and everyone returned to the village, leaving the egg there unbroken. There was no formal felling of the first tree, and no allotment of the different plots of *penda* land.

241
423
From this ceremony onwards all are free to start felling. There is no formal allotment, but villagers divide up the land by mutual discussion, the size of each plot depending on the number of persons in the household to be fed and capable of doing a full day's work with axe and hoe. It is largely a matter of one man volunteering to clear one plot and another man the next, and so on;

the preparation of the *kaghai* site is a task to be accomplished by 241
the whole village. Disputes are practically unknown, owing to this
strong feeling of community of interest. There is, moreover, in 423
the Abujhmar hills ample land for all, and any man is free to work
harder than others if he likes to cultivate a larger plot; but he
seldom does so unless he either is a newly married newcomer to
the village, bent on building up a reserve of grain, or has a large
number of dependents. There is no guarantee that a man will have
the same plot as that allotted to him when the *kaghai* was last
previously cultivated, or even a plot of the same area; but in
villages where land is not so ample as in others, and a *kaghai* may
be cultivated therefore at shorter intervals, each man as far as
possible is allowed the same plot that he occupied at the previous
cutting, though he may have to contribute a part of his former land
to accommodate newcomers or newly married youths. There are
villages where either the *kasyeq-gaita* or the *gaita* is a strong man [622]
and has arrogated to himself a right to allot the *penda* plots; but
he would get short shrift if he were unfair in his allotting: he is
not a chief, but only *primus inter pares* among the village elders.

Plots once allotted and cultivated are for the time the private
property of the householder who cultivates them, and he marks
the limits of his cultivation either by leaving certain tree stumps to
serve as boundary marks (the Bison-horn Marias who retain
permanent rights over their *penda* plots are especially careful about
this, the boundary trees often being left intact and not even lopped,
save in so far as necessary to keep birds off the *penda*), or by planting
lines of roselle (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*) or of *til* (*Sesamum indicum*) [824]
along the edges of his plot; roselle with its crimson seed-vessels
and *til* with its deep yellow blossoms make very vivid boundaries.

Each family fells its own *penda* plots, and the villagers do not 241
combine to clear each plot in turn as they combine in threshing.
The work takes two or three weeks, and the men do all the heavy
work, though women and children assist in cutting small trees and
undergrowth and in arranging them for firing. Any fruit trees are
carefully spared. If any of the ground is dug up with *gudari* hoes,
men do most of the work, though they leave it to women on the flat
dippa lands or on the gentler *penda* slopes. The iron *pulu* digging
stick is used for grubbing up roots large enough to be a serious
impediment. Much timber, when the growth is heavy, is reserved
for fencing the *penda* against wild animals, where any herds of deer
survive. The wood is left to dry through the heat of April and May,
which are holiday months.

When the wood is dry, the *kasyeq-gaita* calls a meeting in the village dormitory to fix a day for firing. All the villagers combine

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

241 to fire all the *penda* plots simultaneously, and the women take no part in this work. There is no public ceremony before the firing; but the *kasyeq-gaita* starts it for the whole village by firing the first bundle of dried brushwood in his own plot with a bundle of dried grass kindled from a glowing ember brought from his own house; he makes fire with a fire-saw only if no ember is available or if it has died on its way to the *penda*. At Handawada in May 1930, heavy rain fell, and so delayed the firing of the *penda* that the *kasyeq-gaita* and village elders went in deputation to the clan-god Verma Pen of the Gume clan at Toinar and promised to sacrifice a cock to him if he would stop the rain; he only received his cock after he had fulfilled the condition and it had been possible to fire the *penda*. The firing takes only three or four days if the wood is really dry.

241 477 Between firing and sowing there is only a short interval in which the villagers must work hard to prepare their fences and field houses. There are no fences between individual plots as a rule, these being marked off either by lines of *til* or roselle at sowing, as already explained, or by laying a few poles lengthwise along the edge of the plots; but there is a general fence around each block of plots, except where there is no risk of animals damaging the crops. A type of fencing found only around Orcha and the Chhota Dongar Mar *pargana*, known as *kokor* (crooked) *garpi*, is a zig-zag stockading of logs laid horizontally on each other, the sides of each projecting angle being fifteen or twenty feet long; it looks like a vast herringbone pattern climbing the hillside. Grass *tum* fences, made in the same way as the *tum* partitions of houses already described, are used where the need for protection from animals is less, and, where bamboo is very plentiful, bamboo wattle-work fences. Another type of substantial timber fence is the *welma* fence consisting of poles laid horizontally one on another, held in position between pairs of bamboo uprights driven into the ground, and tied together at intervals between the horizontal poles; the upright bamboos are generally the two halves of a thick bamboo split lengthwise. I have not noticed in the hill villages the stockades of sal piles driven into the ground which are common among the Murias of the north and are met in Bison-horn Maria villages also.

241 342 513 [374] The chief field-house is really a sleeping platform raised high above the level of the crops on wooden piles, similar to the field watchers' *machan* found throughout Central India, but far more elaborate; the space between the piles below the platform is walled round with bamboo wicker-work or *tum*, and there is a thick thatched roof. As in the dormitories, a fire is kept burning at night below the platform to warm those sleeping on it. Tools and weapons, and cooking pots and food, are kept in the room below the platform,

PLATE XIII

HILL MARIA *PENDA* FIELD, JUST HARVESTED, DUDMARKA, KUTRU MAR

[Facing p. 132]

[face p. 132

241

241 and frequently fowls also, and dogs. From the platform radiate
342 cords of *siari* twine to bamboo rattles hung from trees or posts in
various parts of the field, to enable the occupant to scare birds or
513 animals. It is taboo (*polo*) for women to sleep in these field-houses
(*dodi*). Less elaborate sleeping or resting platforms are also made
which are really cots surrounded with rough round bamboo walls;
for women to cook and to rest in during the heat of the day rough
conical shelters are made of bamboos and leaves, like Red Indian
241 wigwams, known as *panambaksha*. They may also erect big and
small sheds called *ketul*, consisting of thatched eaves resting on
343 upright posts, unwalled; rough granaries for storing grain until
it is removed after the harvest to the permanent granaries; and
log platforms for stacking the reaped sheaves.

Sowing is begun after the first showers of the monsoon rains,
241 in Na month. The date is fixed at a meeting of the men in the
dormitory (*gotul-lon*) a day or two beforehand.
[834] **Sowing** From the night before the sowing (*wijja'i*) till all
the seeds have sprouted, it is taboo for men to cohabit with their
wives, and they therefore sleep with the bachelors in the dormitory.
241 Before sunrise on sowing day the head of each family goes to the
forest and picks two *saja* leaves to serve as 'seed-leaves' (*wijj-ahk*).
769 These he brings into the *lonu* room of his house, and lays on the
floor near the Pot of the Departed; he squats down before them,
raises his hands, palm to palm, to his forehead, and lowers them,
fists closed, to the floor in front of the leaves, saying, '*Tador-pepi
mit kenjat! Miku har kihanom, inje kenjatu, aru maki nehna
nehna anam wayi! Inje ram aimatu, manemasi mantu!*' (Hearken,
O Ancestors! We adjure you, hearken now, and let us have an
excellent harvest! Let not your wrath now fall upon us, and be not
deaf to my prayer).[1] He then hangs the two leaves from the
kitchen (*angadi*) ceiling, where they remain till next seed-time,
when he takes them down, and deposits them on a forest path.

241 On behalf of all the villagers also, the *kasyoq-gaita* makes a
public offering of an egg to the Village Mother, either at her regular
shrine or at some white ants' hill close to the village (not in the *penda*
fields), before they go out to sow. No women may attend this
ceremony.

At the first sowing they broadcast the early ripening varieties of the hill millets over about half the *penda* plots, and sow also lines of *til* or roselle to mark the limits of individual holdings. Subsequent sowings of later crops are not preceded by any ceremony.

---

[1] Literally, word by word, 'Ancestors, you hear! To you remembrance we make, now hear, and to-us good good harvest let-be! Now anger let-not-be, hearing abide.'

241 The people of Bastar are apt to use the Halbi word *kosra* as a generic term for all grains raised by *penda* cultivation. Strictly speaking, it applies only to *kutki*, *Panicum miliaceum*, which the Marias and Murias call *kohala*, to which they also give the same wider meaning as *kosra*. The early sown grains are called generically 'small *kosra*', and those most sown are *Panicum frumentaceum*, known as *sawa* or *ghatka* or, to the Hill Marias, as *amu*, and *Panicum miliare*, known as *sika* or *chikma*, which seems also to be the grain known to the Hill Marias as *turya-kohala*; others sown are *kodon* (*Paspalum scrobiculatum*), *mandia* (*Eleusine coracana*) and *hikka*, a Hill Maria word which I have not been able to identify; the Bison-horn Marias, and, to a much smaller extent, some Hill Marias, also sow much *haruna* or light mountain rice. All these are sown generally without any pulses, but cucumbers, marrows and gourds are sown early near the field-houses. *Panicum frumentaceum* and *Panicum miliare* ripen generally in time for their New Eating festivals to take place at the end of Hagh (July-August); the mountain rice and other early grains are reaped a little later, at the beginning of Eranj (August-September).

Crops

The second main sowing is of the later crops known collectively as 'big *kosra*', chief of which is the true *kosra* or *kutki* (*Panicum miliaceum*), with which will be met *kodon*, *kang* (*Setaria italica*) and *bajra* (*Penicillaria spicata*). These are sown in Ha'i (June-July), to be harvested in Pa (November-December). No attempt is made to keep the different crops separate, and the confusion is made worse by broadcasting with them seeds of various pulses, especially *urad* (*Phaseolus radiatus*; Maria, *pupal*), *arhar* (*Cajanus indicus*), and *sem* (*Dolichos lablab*; Maria, *jata*).

The third sowing is the '*Os kosra*' sowing of a second crop in August-September on the land from which the 'small *kosra*' harvest has already been reaped. About a quarter of this is sown with '*os kosra*' millets, the remaining three-quarters being devoted to pulses, including not only varieties of the 'big *kosra*' pulses, but also *mung* (*Phaseolus mungo*) and *kulthi* (both *Glycine hispida* and *Dolichos biflorus*). This crop is harvested in Pusi (December-January).

241
834
513 The rains bring out a plentiful crop of shoots from the stumps of the trees felled for the *penda*, and before these get too big a day is appointed for all the villagers to cut and get rid of them. As soon as the ears form on the growing crops it is taboo for the men to have sexual intercourse or to sleep in the village. This taboo remains in force until the final combined New Urad and Koqsar festival, when it is held at the end of Pusi

After sowing

(December-January) or in Mah (January-February); if the clan 241 celebrates the festival later (the Jate clan of Mohnar in Mangnar 834 *pargana*, for example, with its brother clans the Tokalor and the Hukur of Erpanar, celebrates it on the full moon day of Chait 513 (March-April)), the men return to their houses and are free to resume marital relations as soon as the last grain has been winnowed, when the *pen-wadda'i* or clan-priest of the village where the clan-god is kept offers an egg before him, and in the subordinate villages of the clan which have no separate clan-god of their own the *kasyeq-gaita* offers an egg before the Village Mother. In some tracts where the New Urad-Koqsar festival is late there is a separate New Kosra festival in Pusi (December-January), and this appears there to be the signal for the ending of this taboo (*pen'o*). For it is not [784] only sexual relations and sleeping in the village that are taboo in this period; but also such activities as the cutting of bamboos and grass, which obviously cannot be postponed so late as Phagur and Chait.

While the taboo lasts, and the men live in the fields, the women 512 sleep in the village, and arrive in the fields at sunrise, bringing the day's food already cooked. The men, before starting their day's 264 work, have a substantial meal of *gato* (Hindi, *bhat*) or thick porridge 262 of mixed hill grains, spiced with the various pulses, roselle and other forest fruits and vegetables, salted, and improved by flesh, if available, of field mice, hares or birds. At about 10 a.m. and again at 2 p.m. they expect to have *jawa* (Hindi, *pej*) or thin gruel consisting of the water in which their *gato* has been boiled. They have a final meal of *gato* at sunset, which the women cook in the fields and give their men to eat there, taking back their own share to eat in the village. Cooking pots are kept generally in the *ketul*. At harvest, to save time and enable the women to get to work earlier, the morning meals also are cooked in the fields. On the last day before a woman is due for the seclusion of the menstruation room or hut, she brings food sufficient to last her menfolk that day and the next five.

Harvest

No ceremony precedes reaping. Men, women and children 241 reap, using small iron sickles of the type common throughout the Central Provinces. I have not seen the reaping of the early grains. The *penda* fields in early December are an untidy sight; the various grains and pulses are sown higgledy-piggledy all over the area, and no attempt is made to keep different crops separate. Reaping is therefore an eclectic and slow performance, especially of such grains as *kang* and *bajra*, little of which are sown, and which have, therefore, to be searched for in the welter of other crops. *Sem* and other pulses riot over the poles planted in

241 the midst of the grain crops to support them. The cut crops which
are to be threshed are stacked on the wooden platforms prepared
[417] before sowing, in beehive shaped stacks, called *paki* by the Hill
Marias and *kupa* in Halbi.

The women prepare the threshing-floor (*karanu* in the hill
dialect), clearing a piece of ground near the stacks of grain, and
plastering it with mud. In the centre of this the men erect a thick
[784] bamboo railing on posts. It is *polo* for women to take part in the
actual threshing. Oxen are never used. For each cultivator in
[476] turn, beginning with the *kasyeq-gaita*, all the men and boys in the
village combine to thresh (*wisna*). They range themselves in two
rows facing each other, with the bamboo railing between them.[1]
Holding this with both their hands and supporting themselves by it,
they dance up and down, rubbing the ears of corn between their
feet. They thresh in this way only *kodon*, *kutki*, rice, *ghatka*,
chikma and *hikka*; the women pick the ears of grains like *kang* and
bajra in baskets, and rub them in their hands to extract the grain.
The cultivator whose grain is being threshed is expected to feed all
the villagers helping him for that day, and if possible to give them
[273] a good drink of *salphi*, the fermented sap of the sago palm (*Caryota
urens*; Maria, *garga marra*), which is raised from cuttings in large
numbers all over the Hill Maria country. The threshed grain is
winnowed by men only, winnowing being as taboo to women as
sleeping in the fields or threshing. One man stands on a rough
wooden platform and pours the grain from a basket held above his
head, while another, if there is not wind enough, winnows the falling
grain with a basketry winnowing fan of the usual Indian type (*het*
in Maria). All the men and women of the village combine to carry
the threshed and winnowed grain of each cultivator to his compartment
in the long granary. They never measure their produce,
but there is no taboo on this account; it simply is that they grow
crops for their own sustenance, and not for sale, and it is easy to
see whether the grain garnered is adequate for the coming year or
804 not. They do indeed understand something of bazaar measures,
for some of their pulses and oil seeds are sold annually to raise the
money needed to pay their poll-tax; they make their own measures
of basketry, with different traditional shapes for each kind of
produce that they sell; and at the bazaar you may see them
measuring out their produce in these in front of the Hindu tradesmen
to whom they are selling it. Their measures are very accurate, and
need never be challenged. If they make them a little too large,
they plaster a little mud over the bottom to reduce the capacity.

---

[1] I have since seen *kodon* and *kutki* threshed in the same way by Korkus on the Betul border of Hoshangabad District, Central Provinces.

The Bison-horn Marias (and, I believe, many of the Murias also) 241 have similar ideas of it being taboo for women to sleep in the fields and to thresh or winnow. They are not so particular about the cessation of conjugal life between the sowing and sprouting of the crops, and between their coming into ear and being garnered. They use bullocks to tread out the grain on a threshing floor. Each cultivator has to take the help of his fellow villagers to carry his corn, but it is a service for which he hires them, and not a routine piece of communal village service in gathering the village crop as in the Abujhmar hills.

The new-eating festivals of the Hill Marias

It is taboo to eat any of the new crops until the appropriate 796 new-eating festival has been celebrated.[a] These are very similar to the *pandum* festivals of the Bison-horn Marias, which will be described in the chapter on religion; but they are less elaborate and are fewer in number; the Bison-horn Maria seems to have a *pandum* as an essential preliminary to almost every act of gathering the produce of field or forest. The Hill Maria has only three, or, in villages where the last festival is held as late as March or early April, four of these festivals. The first is known either as *Tur Korta Tindana* or *Amu Korta Tindana*, according as the chief of the early ripening rains crops is *Panicum miliare* (*turya-kohala*) or *Panicum frumentaceum* (*amu*), and is held at the end of Hagh, that is about the middle of August. In Eranj (September) comes *Hikka Korta Tindana* in villages, like Handawada, where there is no rice cultivation, and *hikka* (see p. 134 above) is the chief crop ripening next after the August crops; where much rice (*wanj*) is grown, *Wanj Korta Tindana* is celebrated instead at the end of Eram (middle of October). This is followed in Pusi (January) in the villages where the final festival is celebrated after February by *Kohala Korta Tindana*, the first eating of the main *Panicum miliaceum* (*kutki*) crop. The last and greatest festival, held on dates varying from the end of January till early April in different clan-areas, is *Pupal Korta Tindana*, combined with *Koqsar*, the clan-god's festival; when this takes place early enough in the year to be economically convenient, it is the new-eating festival not only of *urad* (*pupal; Phaseolus radiatus*) and other pulses and beans, but also of *kutki* and the other late ripening hill grains. '*Korta Tindana*' is Hinduized literally as '*nawa khana*', 'new eating'. [635] A main reason for the varying dates of this last festival is that dancing is permissible only at it, at weddings and at the camps of touring officials. The round of festivities after the final harvest-home is prolonged by celebrating the festival clan after clan; all the youths of neighbouring clans go to dance at each other's *Koqsar*,

[a] [see cat. 116, p. 420. —Analyst]

796 and many a marriage arises from the first meeting of lad and girl in these dances.

The land, as has been seen, is the land of the clan-god (if not
796 even, in some sense, the clan-god himself). It is natural, therefore,
that before any of these festivals are held in the individual villages
[614 of the clan the main ceremony for the whole clan should take place
776] before the clan-god, either in or near the parish where his permanent
hut-temple is situated. When the new grain of the crop concerned has been garnered, the *kasyeq-gaita* of each village sends word to the *pen-waddai* or clan-priest. The clan-priest consults the clan-god personally if himself a medium, or else through a medium, and announces a date for the celebration before the clan-god. On the night before leaving their village to attend the celebration, the *kasyeq-gaita* and all the men who are to go with him next day observe sexual continence, and sleep in the dormitory. The *kasyeq-gaita* is fed that night on fish, at the expense of the village, in some clan-areas. In a few villages a separate *bhum-gaita* exists, whose sole function seems to be to lead the villagers in visits of this kind to the clan-god. Before dawn, each wife grinds about 4 lb. of the new grain for her husband to take to the clan-festival. No women may attend the new-eating ceremonies. Besides supplies of new grain, the *kasyeq-gaita* and men take on behalf of the whole village a cock or two (there is no rule as to the colour of the victim), and perhaps, when the village is large or prosperous, a young boar (*not* a gelded pig) or a barren sow.

796 The deputations from the various villages assemble at the *pen-rawar* or shrine of the clan-god. The god, which in form is always a framework of logs criss-crossed with bamboos and bedecked with peacock feathers, spirals of quills, brass bells and other simple finery, is then taken out of his hut by four men of the clan-priest's family or village, and borne to the traditional place of sacrifice, which may be near the shrine or even outside the main village of the clan, three or four miles from the shrine. There they set the god down on stones under a *saja* tree, and the four bearers have a ceremonial wash. Sometimes the clan-priest again, either himself if a medium, or through mediums, consults the wishes of the god, who always permits the festival to continue, but generally suggests that they should first offer worship to the Village Mother of the
village where the assembly has gathered. All adjourn to her shrine,
796 and there the *kasyeq-gaita* of the village places a grain or two of
787 the new crop on the table-stone or cleft stick representing the
Mother, cuts the throat of a small chicken, sprinkles its blood on the Mother, and throws it down, still alive, on the ground. All watch the chicken eagerly; if after a convulsive leap or two it falls dead on its back with its claws in the air, it is an excellent omen.

falls dead on its back with its claws in the air, it is an excellent omen. When making his offerings, the *kasyeq-gaita* adjures the Mother to remain favourable to the village. 796

All return then to the clan-god, and here the clan-priest offers for each village some of the new grain and cuts the throat of the cocks and pigs brought by each *kasyeq-gaita*, sprinkling blood from each victim on the clan-god, on whom he calls to be ever present to help them, in weal or woe, in field or forest, at home or abroad. In the less important new-eatings, if the practice among the Bardal clan observed in August 1930 at Kutul is universal, the flesh of the sacrificed animals is not then eaten in a communal feast, but divided among the men present, each of whom takes it to his home, where the male members of the family alone eat it with new grain. Some liquor is drunk in the houses by the men and the unmarried girls, but this is not an essential part of the proceedings. The fermented rice gruel, *landa*, which is always freely consumed at Bison-horn Maria *pandums*, is never even manufactured by Hill Marias, who say that it is taboo to them. [273] After the return of each village delegation to its village, the local *kasyeq-gaita* (whether there is a *bhum-gaita* or not) performs a similar ceremony on a smaller scale before his Village Mother; this in some clan-areas is attended by the clan-priest also, as a guest, but not as a celebrant except in a few large villages to which the clan-god is brought for the occasion; in some other villages a cairn or table-stone is set up near the Village Mother's shrine, and, like her shrine, sprinkled with blood. Nor are the Departed forgotten, for they, too, can harm the garnered crops or the next harvest. 769 The housewife pounds the new grain before the festival in a specially made mortar hole with a pestle (*uspal*) washed in water newly drawn from a running stream. She cooks it in the *lonu* room on the Hearth of the Departed (see p. 114 above), and the ashes of this fire are never swept away. In the evening, before the new food is eaten, she places a little as an offering on the floor just in front of the Pot of the Departed, with some appropriate adjuration; and some she places in three *siari* leaves, which in the early morning her husband deposits outside the village by the side of some path (never, apparently, at the cemetery or the Stones of the Dead (*kotokal*)), saying, '*Kopa-hopi muneta tado-pepi hisor mator, ade hintoram*,' meaning, 'We give what our grandfathers and great-grandfathers used to give to their ancestors of old.'

The association of the clan-god with the three first new-eatings is not so marked as at the last, which is the harvest-home celebration. 796 The tendency is to regard them more as domestic than even village ceremonies. No dancing or drumming is allowed at them, and no

796 one visits the celebrations of other clans. The first new-eating is preceded by about four days by the *pira-mansha* or disease-riddance ceremony. Before holding this, the *kasyeq-gaita* obtains the permission of the clan-god. In the early morning every woman sweeps out her house, and the *kasyeq-gaita* goes to each house and collects a little of the sweepings in a winnowing-fan. Before noon all the males of the village go out to the western boundary, and there the collected sweepings are cast aside, either in the winnowing-fan, or else wrapped in rags and tied round a bamboo stick. They hang up on the boundary on cords between trees all their old winnowing-fans and broken baskets. Unmarried boys hang up [481] on a wooden frame at the boundary all their stilts; they make these at the beginning of the rains, and use them from then till this ceremony, their use being taboo at all other seasons: for some [184] reason not divulged, the manufacture and use of stilts is taboo throughout every fourth year. Eggs are offered near the old winnowing-fans and stilts.

The final new-eating, *Pupal Korta Tindana*, is the important occasion of the year. The greatest celebration of this seems to be that of the Usendi clan at Orcha, where their clan-god is brought from Japgunda. From miles around other clans send their youths to dance at the Orcha *Koqsar*; the girls come to carry their food for them, and, though excluded as a matter of course from the ceremonies, join in the dancing that follows *Koqsar*. At the clan new-eating gathering the village delegations assemble in the usual way with new pulses and grain, and the clan-priest sacrifices the cocks and pigs which they bring and sprinkles their blood on the clan-god. Then, however, the flesh of the victims is not divided up and carried off to be eaten in the houses, but boiled with the grain, etc., brought by the villages, in the clan-god's cooking pots kept at his *pen-rawar* in a special shed. When cooked, the stew is spread on a great dish of *siari* leaves stitched with thorns or bamboo splinters, and all the men sit round it on stones in a great circle, while the clan-priest goes round and, with his hands, serves a helping from the communal dish in each man's leaf-plate. The [535 *Koqsar* portion of the festival seems to be the orgy of dancing that follows; for it should be remembered that in most of the Abujhmar 834] country this festival signifies the end of the long period during which it is taboo for the men to sleep in their houses and to have sexual intercourse. It is not a coincidence that the drums are beaten [533] with the same rhythm at *Koqsar* and at weddings.

Small villages often do not have a separate *Pupal Korta Tindana* 796 before the Village Mother. But in the larger villages, especially 622 where the *udam-garya* custom prevails, the village celebration is important, for then the *kasyeq-gaita* and, in a minor degree, the secular headman have their hour of glory, and something of the honour that might be paid to real chieftains. The *kasyeq-gaita* as intermediary between the Village Mother and her children sacrifices to her a pig and a cock, and sets before her a basket of new *kutki*, pulses and beans. A feast similar to that before the clan-god follows. Then the *kasyeq-gaita* proceeds to his *udam-garia* or seat-of-honour, next to which may be a smaller seat for the secular headman (*gaita* or *peda*); it is either a long, flat boulder, or a flat stone supported on stone legs, as in Plate XXIII. He wears no insignia, and is to all appearance as naked and poor a Maria as all his villagers. The men seat themselves around in a circle on little stone cromlechs. Then the *kasyeq-gaita* formally announces the programme for the next year, what *penda* slope is to be cultivated, what arrangements are to be made to meet State or zamindari demands for land revenue or labour, and so on; the announcements, it is true, are the results of previous informal village discussions, and not the *kasyeq-gaita's* orders independently conceived by him, but his formal promulgation is needed before they can be brought into effect. 196 622

After *Koqsar* they are free to cut grass and bamboos, and to collect forest produce, or to hunt; it is true that in most villages there is little game but hares and field-mice, but a Maria thinks a field-mouse the rarest of delicacies, and will stop any occupation to chase a mouse or dig them out.[1] But the long year is over at last, and till the next sowing, though there is ahead the labour of felling, spreading and firing the wood for the *penda*, taboos are lifted, and there is no fear of harm to growing things from the queer magic inherent in sex. So now is the season of new marriages and of conjugal life in the home, and the seed is sown for the raising of the human crop. 224 262

Assessment and payment of land revenue among the Hill Marias

It has been indicated that there are the beginnings of permanent cultivation among the Hill Marias. As a matter of fact, several villages have traces of old rice embanked fields. Two things long effectively checked the spread of permanent cultivation. One, before the 1910 rebellion, was the presence of a police station at Kutul, the headquarter village of the Bardal clan and *pargana* in the very heart of the Abujhmar hills. This meant a constant demand from the Kutul police for rice as *bisaha*,[2] and 241 651

---

[1] I had a carefully arranged beat for a family of man-eating tigers at Kutru ruined because the Hill Maria beaters rushed in wild enthusiasm to catch two or three mice disturbed by the beat.

[2] See p. 14 above.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

241 the few who grew it soon abandoned its cultivation and returned to the hill grains which the police would not eat. The second thing, 651 even more potent than the demand for *bisaha* because of its universality, was the land revenue policy. In the remotest times the hill villages paid what little assessment the Chiefs imposed on them in kind, royal granaries being situated at centres like Barsur, Partabpur and Narainpur. There is no need to believe the picturesque story told first to Elliot in 1853 and since repeated by writers down to Russell and Hiralal, that 'their tribute to the Raja of Bastar, paid in kind, was collected once a year by an officer who beat a tom-tom outside the village and forthwith hid himself, whereupon the inhabitants brought out whatever they had to give and deposited it on an appointed spot '[1]; this is one of the typical tales with which the old State officials used to try to disguise their utter ignorance of every part of their charge except the handful of villages in their immediate vicinity. But in actual fact there was no regular assessment. The secular headman of the village (*gaita* or *peda*) collected as a rough poll-tax from every able-bodied male cultivator whatever he could fairly be called upon to contribute in kind, and delivered the village contribution at the royal granary. Even when the Chief in 1805 and 1872 attempted for the first time to settle villages with outside lessees and to assess the land revenue on the basis of fixed payments partly in cash and partly in kind for every plough, his officers made no effort to interfere with the traditional system in the Abujhmar hills. But after the State came under management in 1891, the authorities aimed at gradually introducing improved settlement methods based on the experience of British districts in the Central Provinces. The general method was to ascertain the rate per plough imposed at the late Raja's last settlement, to decide what enhancement per plough each village could bear, and then to ascertain the number of ploughs in each cultivator's possession and in the whole village. The number of ploughs was estimated from a rough calculation of the seed capacity of each field, and further checked by comparison with the number of cattle, counted when brought home to the village in the evening. In the better cultivated parts of Bastar, seed capacity of 7½ *khandis*[2] 241 was regarded as a plough of land, and in the jungly parts seed 651 capacity of 5½ *khandis*. Simultaneously, every effort was made 427 to extend to all parts of the State the leasing of villages to *thekadars* or lessees, who were available in numbers in the open and settled parts and only too ready to seize the chance of getting the aboriginal

[1] Russell and Hiralal, Vol. III, p. 120.

[2] The Bastar *khandi* is a measure equivalent to 40 *paili* or 160 *soli*; a *soli* contains 40 *tolas*, or approximately 1 lb.'s weight of rice.

villages there for nothing, with the hope of appropriating the best 241
village lands for themselves and getting them tilled by the forced
labour of the villagers. The theory was that good and substantial 651
cultivators from outside the State would bring capital and improved 427
methods into Bastar and play something of the part played by
the landlord in the development of English agriculture. In practice
the *thekedari* system was the cause of untold harm even in the
permanent villages of the State, where the alien *thekedar* destroyed
the solidarity of village and tribal life besides mercilessly exploiting
the aboriginals, whom indeed he goaded into rebellion in 1910.
Luckily, I was able to secure its abolition for the future, and every
opportunity has been taken to resume management of the villages
through the headmen when a lease has fallen in or in cases of
mismanagement.

When the authorities tried to apply the system to wild regions
like the Abujhmar hills, fortunately for the Hill Marias their
reputation as sorcerers was such, and their cultivation was so
primitive, that no foreigners would take leases of their villages.
There were hardly any ploughs, and the problem of estimating the 241
seed capacity of *penda* plots on remote and steep hillsides was too
much for the wits and energy of badly paid Hindu *patwaris*. A 651
farcical record was, however, prepared of the number of 'hoe-ploughs' of land cultivated by each Hill Maria on the basis of
a seed capacity assumed in nine cases out of ten by pure guess-work,
the *patwari* and his superior officials never going near the villages.
Individual assessments were then made on each man, in spite of
the communal feeling in regard to the land. These assessments
varied in their incidence without rhyme or reason, except that they
had been based on guess-work. Men deserted their villages in large
numbers and migrated into the Chanda part of the hills or into
the Bastar zamindaris, with which the authorities were not so
concerned. As it was felt that every good village should have
a lessee, and no outsider would come near, the hapless headman
of many a village was made to put his thumb-mark to a lease deed
of his village, only to find himself in consequence legally responsible
for the whole village assessment, even if his villagers had absconded
or were unable to pay. The post of headman became one to be
avoided or nominally given to the simpleton of the village, whom
the villagers would put forward as a figurehead, while the *kasyeq-gaita* retained the religious headmanship and was the real headman
so far as the villagers were concerned. No allowance was made for
the vagaries of shifting cultivation ; though one year a man newly
married or with a large growing family to support might be allowed
by the village a larger *penda* area than others, and after a year or two

241
651

would get only the normal share, yet, if the settlement took place in the first year, he might find himself saddled for all the period of settlement with a rent estimated on the seed capacity of that year. If a man dies, his widow is maintained by the village community and does not have her own cultivation; the taboo customs make any other arrangement impossible: but the State authorities would expect her, till the end of the settlement, to pay the rent assessed on her husband in his lifetime, and in practice this became a charge on the village. Villages themselves shift, as we have seen; and sometimes some villagers settle in one *paghai* and some in another. The *patwaris* would report these as two villages, and the settlement arrangements would be made accordingly. When *patwaris* came to prepare the annual rent papers, they might find that the villagers were cultivating a new *kaghai* and say that they had not only to pay the rent assessed on the *kaghai* that they were cultivating at settlement, but also an additional rent because they had also taken up 'new' land.

These are examples of the absurdities of the blind application to this most primitive race of assessment ideas evolved from those built up on long experience of other parts of India where there is little trace left of the old feelings of village solidarity. Fortunately, *patwaris* were too few, too tired and too afraid of 'Maria magic' to spend a moment longer in the Abujhmar hills than they could help; and those who should have checked their work shared their fears and found that there was more need of their presence in the tracts where assessments were considerable. A high and remote *penda* slope would never be visited at settlement, and even if the *patwari* made enquiries in his camp from assembled villagers they soon began to learn the virtues of concealment; the system, in fact, dealt a severe blow to the natural frankness of the people. The only kind of land that could not be concealed from the *patwari*, because always on the lower levels and close to the approach paths of the village, was the occasional patch of two or three permanent rice fields, on which promptly a very high rate of rent was assessed, little less than that applied in the rice lands of the good villages of the plains. The breaking of land into permanent cultivation should be regarded as an improvement in such tracts and exempted from enhancement of assessment. Cultivators with little use or understanding of money were scared at once by the prospect of more market bickering than ever to raise the cash to pay the enhanced rent, and before the 1927 Antagarh tahsil re-settlement practically all permanent rice cultivation had disappeared from the Abujhmar hills.

That 1927 settlement was, I hope, the last that will ever be attempted on such lines. The Settlement Officer did not personally visit any Maria village or check the work of his subordinates on the ground. He called in the headmen to camps in the plains below, and announced the new rents. All had been enhanced on the basis of these seed capacity statements. These were of the usual guess-work type. The *patwaris* did not even visit each village, but called all the villagers from three or four villages to one camp and asked them how much land they cultivated. If a man said that he was cultivating a large area, his word was accepted, and he was assessed accordingly. If he equally truly said that he was cultivating four or five acres, the *patwari* refused to believe it and wrote him down as holding a 'hoe-plough' of thirteen or fourteen acres. Naturally, many villagers deserted to other lands of their clans in the zamindaris. In the years following the settlement, *patwaris* went to each village to prepare the annual papers, and a *patwari* who wanted to make a show of zeal generally reported that more land was being cultivated than at settlement, and had the alleged new areas assessed. In 1930 I found many examples of this; at Handawada the villagers had been assessed at settlement to Rs. 33 for 124 acres, and, as in the next two years the *patwari* had reported new cultivation, the assessment had been raised to Rs. 41. On measuring the cultivation on the spot, I found that seventeen able-bodied cultivators in all had 68½ acres. Four or five acres is, in fact, enough *penda* land to provide sustenance for the ordinary Hill Maria family.

Government accepted my recommendation to cancel this settlement in the Hill Maria country, and in its place to impose a poll-tax on every able-bodied male over sixteen years of age. The number of assessees is to be checked every fifth year, and every other check will thus coincide with the decennial census, and save duplication of work. The headman and elders are made responsible for collection and payment, and arrears are leviable from the village as a whole, not from individuals; it is left to the village community to decide what to do to any individual slacker. A commission of 1½ annas in the rupee is paid to the headman for prompt full payment. Rice or other permanent cultivation is not specially assessed. No annual papers are prepared. *Pari passu* with the quinquennial count of able-bodied men, cattle are to be counted for assessing grazing rates, the annual enumeration of cattle being abolished; the rates will not be varied during the five years, whatever the increase in the number of cattle. The changes apply to the whole of the Hill Maria country in Bastar, in whatever administrative division it is situated.

The re-settlement of the whole area on this basis was carried out after I had left Bastar, in 1932, and was everywhere welcomed

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

241 651 by the Marias. It deals with the village community through its mouthpieces, the headmen and the elders. Many have returned to Bastar from the Chanda Maria country. The best sign which I observed when I spent the first month of my 1934 furlough in the Abujhmar hills was that the long abandoned rice fields are all being restored to cultivation. It is interesting to note that the headman has never ventured to keep the commission for himself, but always either divides it among the villagers, or by common consent spends it on pork or liquor for a village feast.

241 In the Bison-horn country as a whole there is now as much permanent and semi-permanent cultivation as *penda*, and the *patwaris* have always been more accurate in their records. The people are more sophisticated and ready to safeguard their interests. The *penda* lands are fairly accessible, except in the hilliest parts. It has been pointed out already that each piece of each *penda* site, whether at the moment under bush or under crop, is now regarded as the individual holding of some cultivator. The people have many markets in their midst, and understand measures and seed capacities. It has not, therefore, been necessary to apply the poll-tax system there. A great deal could be done even there to turn the people from shifting to permanent cultivation by recognizing new permanent cultivation as an improvement.

Methods of permanent cultivation among the Hill Marias

Where the Hill Marias have started permanent cultivation they have in general adopted the methods of surrounding Murias or Bison-horn Marias, save that very few of them have mastered or attempted to master ploughing, but prepare the land with their *gudari* digging hoes. A few now keep hired Rawat herdsmen, but do not themselves tend, milk or work their cattle. If the recognition of permanent cultivation as an improvement could be combined with a determined attempt by the State to teach carting, ploughing and milking, even among the Bison-horn Marias, shifting cultivation would be greatly diminished.

243 312 When he does grow rice, the Hill Maria generally does not irrigate it with water led from a storage reservoir or tank; his method is rather to build his dam across a stream or waterway and to cultivate the land above it. The illustration opposite shows both sides of the dam made in 1930 for cultivation of this kind at Tondawada; the deep hole below the dam was made when its predecessor was washed away by an abnormal flood. No water flows here in the cold weather. First a wall of grass *tuwe*[1] was erected along the length of the dam, and behind this a wall of *melma*[1] horizontal pole fencing, supported behind with thicker pole piles

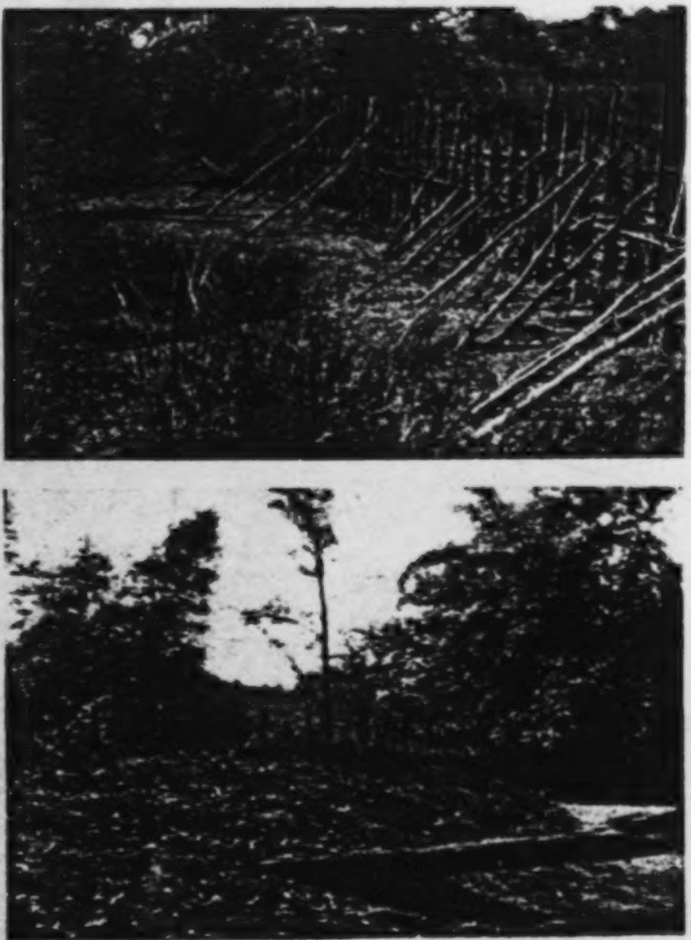
---

[1] See p. 132 for definition of *tuwe* and *melma*.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

PLATE XIV

312
243



TONDAWADA, HILL MARIA DAM FOR RICE CULTIVATION
Above Downstream face *Below* Upstream face

[Facing p. 146]

243 312 driven into the ground; these were buttressed further with slanting pole props with forked ends bearing against the vertical piles, while smaller forked poles were at intervals driven into the dam on either side of the piles, but below the slanting props. This vertical pole-revetting faced downstream. Against the upstream face of the grass *tum* earth was banked with a gentle slope and gently sloped off to ground level upstream. A large and nearly hollow tree-trunk was left in the middle of the dam, to act as a pipe to carry off excess water. They called the dam *naḍi*, and the tank *oṛe*. It was not built to store water, but to retain moisture in the tank-bed, and it was the bed which was cultivated, being dug all over with the *gudari* before the rains. The dam was still serviceable when I visited Tondawada in 1934, four years later, and other small rice plots had been made higher up the waterway by placing low mud dams across it. Though the village had shifted from the adjacent site and the *penda* slopes under cultivation in 1934 were far away, these rice patches were being prepared for cultivation in readiness for the 1934 monsoon.

Bison-horn Maria cultivation

241 Though it has been said above that the Bison-horn Maria has as much permanent or semi-permanent cultivation as *penda*, there are many tracts in his country where *penda* is his main occupation. All Gonds or Koitor, wherever I have met them, seem at heart to long to revert to the raising of the light millets off the ashes of felled timber; though it is prohibited in the British districts of the Central Provinces, I have seen it in the *jagir* estates of the Chhindwara and Hoshangabad districts, and in the Nagpur district the prospect of being allowed to do this for the first year or two was in 1932 the best bait for attracting Gond settlers to a forest village in Ramtek tahsil and even to a malguzar's waste lands village in Saoner tahsil. So it would take little to make the far less advanced Bison-horn Maria abandon permanent rice cultivation and stick to *penda* on the hill slopes or *erka* on the plains; and much of his semi-permanent cultivation is only *parka* cultivation of former *erka* lands necessitated by their final refusal to bear any more forest after years of shifting cultivation; instead of at once applying permanent methods to the land, he cuts brushwood from other forests and brings them to the deforested land to burn instead of the brushwood it bore in former years. But in these *parka* fields he can raise only rice, not his beloved small millets. In his *penda* fields he sows only *kutki*, *Panicum miliaceum*, of the type sown as the main crop in the Abujhmar hills; but in many places the forest growth felled for his *penda* is almost pure bamboo, and here instead of *kutki* he sows what he calls *gondku*, which I have not had identified.

241 In his *mudur erka* (big tree *erka*) he raises *chikma* (*Panicum miliare*), *gatka* (*Panicum frumentaceum*) and *sama*, all crops of the first sowing, ripening by early August, and, as main crops, *mandia* (*Eleusine coracana*) which he calls *gurra*, and *kutki*, which he, like the Hill Maria, calls *kohala*, both of which ripen with the *penda kutki* [273] in early December; with him *Eleusine coracana* is an important crop, as he uses it as a principal ingredient in his *landa* intoxicant. In his *marram erka* (brushwood *erka*) he sows only the pulses *urad* (*Phaseolus radiatus*), which he calls *popul*, and *kulthi* (*Glycine hispida* and *Dolichos biflorus*) which he calls *koreng*. The '*os kosra*' millets which the Hill Maria sows as a second crop after the crops reaped in August he calls '*mach kohala*', and sows not only similarly as a second crop, but also as the main crop in his *erka* land for the third and last year of its cultivation, when it is too exhausted to bear anything else.

241
423 Besides the fact observed on page 128 above that, unlike the Hill Maria, he ploughs the ashes, or digs them with his hoe, into his *erka* and *penda* lands, these lands have, therefore, this further great difference from the Hill Maria *penda* lands, that each crop has its own appropriate type of cultivation, and is therefore sown separately, not jumbled up with every other kind of crop in a hopeless welter. He is, moreover, careful to preserve any mango or other fruit trees on his plot. As he retains permanent rights over his plot, whether it is tilth or forest at the moment, he has to be more careful over its boundaries than the Hill Maria, and cannot be content with the temporary sowing of a line of *til* or roselle. At each burning, therefore, he spares important trees or stumps at boundary junctions, which he calls *sarkari* or 'authority' trees, and sometimes he leaves a thin line of trees standing along his boundary when he fells the forest. He generally grows his beans and gourds on these and other trees, not on poles stuck up in the middle of other crops like the Hill Maria.

241 It has been seen that he has always a *bari* garden enclosure round or near his house in the village, which he calls *lon-welung* or
[417] 'house fencing', and generally fences with either bamboo wattlework (*wedur-welung*) or a fence of brushwood tied slantwise between
[231] horizontal struts (*jhat-welung*). Here at night he pens his cattle, and the ground is thus richly manured to bear maize (*jonna*), *sarson* or mustard (*tarson*) and tobacco (*pogo*)[1] as essential crops, with in these days frequent patches of chillies, tomatoes and other vegetables. *Sarson* is the most paying crop exported from Bastar,

---

[1] The Hill Maria grows tobacco and a few poor chillies and tomatoes in little plots left clear of dab grasses when *penda* land is useless for grain.

and its cultivation has spread among all lowland Gonds, who expect 241
to pay their land revenue out of its proceeds.

Lastly there are the permanent rice lands, for wet cultivation. 243
There are wide areas of permanently embanked and irrigated rice
fields (*weda*), the use of which the Bison-horn Marias have learnt 242
from their Hindu neighbours; more typical of them are the embankments of little hill-side watercourses into a series of descending little fields, which they call *jhorki weda*. The only fields which they consider can really be cultivated year after year, without resting fallow or the refreshment of wood ash or cow-dung ash, are the fields with good deep black soil; but too frequently the Maria has been elbowed out of such lands by the Hindu lessee of his village, or by Halba settlers. The other rice lands the Bison-horn Maria believes to become exhausted or 'develop sand' after two or three years' cultivation, and he then leaves them fallow for four or five years or more till they are covered with a thick growth of grasses and weeds, especially a grass he calls *chimmia*. The grass, although not burnt like forest in *erka* and *penda*, is looked upon by him in much the same way as a fertilizing agent to be ploughed into the soil; and so in a considerable degree even the cultivation of his *weda* rice fields must be regarded as shifting.

He ploughs these fallow lands up during the rains, unless, 243
owing to their position, they are too wet to be ploughed till the end of the rains, and he repairs the embankments so that each field may retain ample water to rot the grass and weeds. At the end of the rains he gives them a second and more thorough ploughing, and leaves them alone all through the dry season. Just before the monsoon bursts he broadcasts rice seed, and then, when it has sprouted and there is adequate water in the fields, he follows the Chhattisgarhi practice of *biasi*; that is to say, he puddles up the field, young plants and all, by working all over it a flat log, on which he stands, yoked to a pair of oxen. When the land has been ploughed both before and at the end of the rains, the system is called *kohana*; where only the ploughing at the end of the rains has been possible, it is called *karkatti*. The second system is, of course, applied to all fields that have borne a crop just before being ploughed.

If it rains heavily before *kohana* and *karkatti* lands prepared in this way can be sown broadcast, they resort to the '*lai*' system. The seed is soaked in cold water and placed in baskets lined with the sacred *saja* leaves, filled with thick liquid cow manure, and covered over with *palas* (*Butea frondosa*) leaves; it is left thus for three or four days to sprout. The sprouted seed is washed out of the cow-dung with warm water, and is then sown broadcast. A

243 *kopar* or flat log is dragged by oxen over the field according as the seed has sprouted vigorously or slightly. In many parts of Bijapur and Dantewara tahsils the *lai* system of sowing is the normal rule. Bison-horn Marias also often take a *kopar* over their *parka* and *erka* fields after they have ploughed in the ashes after the first showers of rain, so as to ensure thorough mixing of the soil and ashes. Light or heavy rice is sown in the *wada* and *jhorki wada* fields according to its position; light rice ripening early is thus generally sown in the *jhorki wada*, which drains rapidly, and always in the dry *parka* lands. The mountain rices sown in *penda* and high-level *erka* lands cannot be acclimatized in the plains.

312 In the *Gazetteer* it was stated that the people of Bastar generally were very slow to understand the advantages of irrigation; land and rain are abundant everywhere except in the south. But of recent years many Bison-horn Maria villages have constructed small *mundas* or tanks, partly for irrigation, and partly to water their cattle; and tank-bed cultivation such as that in the Hill Maria village of Tondawada described earlier in this chapter is much commoner among them.

000 This completes this account of Hill and Bison-horn Maria agriculture. The Bison-horn Maria has a number of agricultural ceremonies to sanctify his various operations and of taboos like the Hill Maria, but far more, and, like his agricultural methods, more elaborate. They will be described in the chapter on religion; their recital in this chapter would have overburdened an already long account.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

CHAPTER VIII

PROCURING OF OTHER FOOD AND DRINK

> 'Whatever came across them they must needs kill and eat it; 539
> They made no distinction. If they saw a jackal they killed
> And ate it; no distinction was observed; they respected not antelope,
> sambhar and the like.
> They made no distinction in eating a sow, a quail, a pigeon,
> A crow, a kite, an adjutant, a vulture,
> A lizard, a frog, a beetle, a cow, a calf, a he- and a she-buffalo,
> Rats, bandicoots, squirrels—all these they killed and ate.
> So began the Gonds to do. They devoured raw and ripe things.'
> (Hislop's version of the Lingo epic of the Gonds.)

A. *Food Gathering*

FAMINE has never been a problem in Bastar, as the Marias and 222 other tribes have always been able to draw half of their food supplies 262 from the innumerable edible products of the vast forests. The difficulty is not so much to say what they collect and eat as what they do not; in fact, if one were to take one of the lists of trees, shrubs and herbs compiled by the Central Provinces Forest Department, and copy from it the names of all edible forest products, one would not even then produce an exhaustive list. At page 124 above, many of the more important forest products collected and garnered were enumerated. *Mahua* (*Bassia latifolia*) is not common in the Abujhmar hills, where consequently little *mahua* spirit is distilled [273] or drunk; where it does occur, the Hill Marias collect its flowers and fruit as eagerly as cultivators throughout India. It is common in the Bison-horn country. The women and children gather the fallen flowers in the mornings. It is dried in the sun, and then stored in bamboo wicker baskets; it keeps a long time. It is used [263] to flavour *pej* and *gato*, or roasted. Oil is pressed in the plains from the fruit. Tamarind trees are not really wild, but were originally planted around village sites; the fruit is carefully gathered from all the unoccupied village sites. The fruits of the *achar* (*Buchanania latifolia*) and *tendu* (*Diospyros melanoxylon*) are two of the main sources of food supply. They collect also fruit of the *seona* (*Gmelina arborea*), *jamun* (*Eugenia jambolana*) and *aonla* (*Phyllanthus emblica*). Wild mangoes are common, and they are learning to cultivate the tree; they store whole fruit, dried pulp, and kernels whole or crushed. In the south of the State the toddy palm (*Borassus flabellifer*) is the mainstay of the economic life of the people, but

222 it is not much used among Bison-horn and Hill Marias in comparison
to the *salphi* or sago palm (*Caryota urens*; Maria, *garga marra*)
262 which is found wild and is extensively propagated. When the
salphi, after much cutting of the spadix for the intoxicating sap,
ceases to flower, the interior of the stem yields a fibrous pith. This
[252] the Hill Maria women (probably the Bison-horn also) pound on
a large flat stone with a heavy oval pebble held in their right hand,
to separate pith from fibre. The resultant pith 'grain' looks like
lime, and is steamed into cakes; an earthenware pot has a little
water poured into it, and over the water bamboo sticks are criss-crossed
and covered with *siari* leaves as a platform for the pith
to be steamed; no salt or sugar is added.

222 Actually most of the fruit already mentioned is collected by
women and children; the men, of course, deal with the toddy and
sago palm sap, and their methods will be described in the section
on drinking and intoxicants. The men collect those forest products
which they need for basketry or rope making, or in finding which
there is an element of the chase. They like to roam about with
their bows and arrows while their women are busy gathering fruit.

222 The women gather also various leaves, flowers and seeds as
262 vegetables. They use the young green leaves and the seeds of the
sal (*Shorea robusta*); the flowers of the *giril marra* shrub (*Indigofera
arborea*); the young curled fronds of bracken in the Abujhmar hills,
possibly also on the Bailadila mountains, where, too, it is common
(the Hill Marias call it *handa jabba* and the Bison-horn *anda koser*);
the seeds of the marking nut tree (*Semecarpus anacardium*; *bhelwa*);
the young green shoots, pith and seeds of the bamboo; the fruits
of the *ber* (*Zizyphus jujuba*). The digging of forest roots and yams
in the rains is one of the women's chief occupations; there are many
varieties, and some are now cultivated. In the early rains a much
sought after foods are the *khudrati* or *bora* fungus, and the mushroom.
Various wild plants are gathered as vegetables from marsh and
river valley, especially the *chiur*, the long thin leaves of which are
like small hyacinth leaves, and are a favourite food of wild buffalo
and bison. Women and men collect large supplies of *siari* or
[415] elephant creeper leaves for use as plates and drinking vessels.
Aki is the Gondi word for a leaf, and the assonance *aking-waking*
is commonly used as covering all produce which the Maria collects
from the forest.

In August and September the Bison-horn Maria women spend hours swishing a basket[1] over the tops of certain wild grasses in the fields to collect the seeds, which are eaten like the small hill grains.

---

[1] Hill Maria women also do this, using little wicker-work shields fastened to bamboo sticks to beat the grass seeds into a basket.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

A little later they collect *kapani*, the wild bearded rice common in 222
all old rice fields and fallows and at the edges of standing water, 262
by holding a winnowing-fan in one hand and beating the grain of
the standing ripe plants into it with the other ; the bearded ears [531]
are sometimes plaited into '*sela*' fringes for ornamenting doors
of houses at the new-eating festivals.

The men are adept in collecting the honey of various kinds of 222
bees, though sometimes, despite forest rules, too prone to save
trouble by felling rather than climbing a fine tree. For this purpose,
and for tapping palm trees, they often fasten to the trunks of trees
long thick bamboos, cutting the side shoots down to stumps four
or five inches long to serve as ladder rungs. Gums are collected [314]
from many species of trees, for use as bird-lime or in securing the
kosa silk whipping of arrow-heads, etc. In Dantewara and Bijapur
tahsils the Forest Department has quantities of *tasar* silk cocoons
collected by Bison-horn Maria men when, in the rains in the intervals
between sowing and reaping their various crops, they go out to
the forests in search of such delicacies as red ants' nests, ant-eaters,
rats, squirrels and grubs. The cocoons are high on sal or *saja* trees ;
where the climbers cannot reach them they use long bamboo poles
with a piece of bamboo fastened at an acute angle at the end to
serve as a hook. They get about Rs. 3 a thousand cocoons from [435]
the Koshta weavers who employ them ; the Hill Maria, however,
generally collects only what cocoons he needs for his own purposes.
Red ants' nests are cooked, leaves, ants and all, either with *pej* [252]
or *gato*, or by themselves and eaten with pulses as a vegetable.
They are also a favourite febrifuge ; a rough and ready remedy 757
is to shake out the live red ants on to the patient's skull, when
the formic acid of their stings is said to reduce the fever ; the more
elaborate method is to boil the nest, ants and all, and to strain off
and use the juice as a febrifuge in small doses ; this juice is said
to taste sharper than any lime and believed to be invaluable for [314]
a long-standing fever. In collecting the palms of the dwarf palms 222
chhind (*Phoenix sylvestris*), *P. acaulis*, and *buta chhind* (*P. farinifera*)
for use for thatching, basketry or making rough cords for binding
fences, the men not only collect the small dates or the flowers
(according to season) and the edible pith of the *buta chhind*, but
also the fat white grub of a certain beetle, which is also found in
the stems of the toddy palm and in fresh green monsoon bamboo
shoots. This is eaten fried in ghee or oil with a little spice and [252]
chillies, and is regarded as a great delicacy ; it is sold in the Jagdalpur market for three or four pice, and even high-caste Hindus buy it.
When white ants emerge in flying swarms early in the monsoon
they collect them after they have shed their wings, or pull the wings

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

222 off, and eat them raw. The men gather the edible bean-pods of the *siari* (*Bauhinia vahlii*) creeper when cutting its stems for rope fibre and gathering its leaves for plates, rain hats and shields, but generally light a fire then and there in the forest and roast the beans in the pods, when it is easy to extract them to eat.

B. *Hunting and Trapping*

Hill Marias

224 The Hill Maria is as omnivorous as all Gonds, and it is difficult to discover what he will not eat if he can get it. But there is little game left in the Abujhmar hills, except where the hills descend to the Indrawati, Gudra and Kotri valleys. The *shikaris par excellence* of Bastar are the Murias of the northern plateaux and the Bison-horn Marias of the *parganas* around Barsur and the Indrawati valley, where there is still fairly plentiful game. The Hill Maria is therefore not an expert beater, though twenty-four hours spent by any would-be sportsman in Kutru territory in training Hill Marias to beat will be amply rewarded, not only by the quick way in which they learn, even if taught only by pantomime, but by the fun and humour with which they will take their lesson. They have memories of hunting tiger, panther, bison, buffalo, deer of all kinds, and even, very shadowy, of rhinoceros.[1] But the appearance in the hills of one or two [787] tiger after the 1931 census for the first time within human memory was interpreted as a sign of divine displeasure, and all the census house numbers painted by the enumerators on little squares of wood prepared *ad hoc* by the Marias and preserved in many houses for each census from 1911 onwards were collected together and burnt on the village boundaries to placate the Departed. Outside Tondawada village a panther was shot by the village lads with arrows thirty years or more ago; three small stone menhirs about twenty inches high were driven then into the ground at the spots where its head, the root and the tip of its tail had lain when it fell dead; the feat is still spoken of as a deed of prowess. Orcha is the only Hill Maria village, so far as I am aware, that follows the practice of the spring hunt before sowing the crops, which is so marked and important a feature of tribal life among the Bison-horn Marias, the Parjas and Bhattras; but the Orcha people seem to have copied the hunt from the Bison-horn Marias without its religious significance; there is no sprinkling of blood on the first seeds sown, no ceremony before and after the hunt, women take no part in the proceedings to drive unwilling men out to the hunt, and no portion of the slain quarry is offered to the clan-god, the

---

[1] Compare *Gazetteer*, p. 32. The rhinoceros tradition still existed in 1928.

Village Mother or the Departed. Bowmen are posted in advance, 224
and they beat the game up to them. They share and share alike in
the bag, no special limb being reserved for first arrow or first spear
or anyone.

They all have bows, and arrows of varying sizes and shapes 411
for every kind of living thing, but are not very expert in their use,
save in the lower country where game still abounds. There is no 224
bird and no animal that they will not shoot or trap and eat if they
can get it.

But in most of their country the only creatures that they can 224
trap are hare, jungle-fowl and peafowl. A sure sign of the nearness of a Hill Maria village is the presence of numerous hare-traps (*morel-guda*) by the side of a path. A small oval of ground is cleared of growth and surrounded either with small boulders or with sticks driven into the ground, and about eighteen inches above it. A passage is left unfenced at each narrow end of the oval wide enough for a hare to enter by one and go out by the other without turning round. The trapper urinates in the oval, and it is a considerate act for any passer-by to do so; in some villages a common urinal pot is kept by the dormitory for use at night, and the urine is divided in the morning between the hare-trappers. The ground inside the oval is soon impregnated by the salt, and hares begin, therefore, to frequent it. When this is known from the droppings which they leave there, the inner passage is blocked up with sticks or boulders, and behind it a bamboo is fixed in the ground to serve as a spring. Two strings are tied to the top of the bamboo, one for the release trigger of the trap, and the other passed through a hollow bamboo tube four or five inches long, to end in a running noose. The release-trigger is a length of thin bamboo stick which is laid more or less horizontally across the oval, one end resting lightly against the inside of one wall of the trap, and the other placed under the 'tap' of a bamboo stick fastened in the ground by the opposite wall of the trap; the 'tap' is a short length of stick branching downwards from the main stick. The tap stick is called *dim-kola*.[1] The noose is looped over the entrance to the trap, the bamboo tube being hung on one of the wall sticks or rested on one of the boulders. The hare enters through the noose to get his salt, dislodges the release trigger from the side of the wall opposite the tap stick, and so releases the spring. As this flies up, the bamboo tube slides down the other string towards the noose and helps to tighten it around the hare.

Pitfalls covered lightly with earth and leaves on criss-crossed sticks, and with spears or bamboo spikes planted in the bottom, are made in game paths for deer. A form of trap made by Hill Marias, but commoner among Jhoria Murias and Bison-horn Marias, is the *bewar* ; the *penda* or *dippa* plot is surrounded by a high fence or stockade, called *bewar* in Halbi and *ganao* by Murias and Marias. A space wide enough for a sambhar or two to enter is left in one wall of the enclosure, and this is cleared of all growth, swept clean daily, and sometimes spread with sand ; this is called the 'road' (*sarak*). At another point in the fence, generally the corner remotest from the 'road', they leave a narrow exit passage, 6 or 7 feet long and 1½ feet wide at ground level. The whole floor of this passage is dug out to a depth of 6 feet, and spears and sharpened bamboo stakes are planted in the bottom. The sides of the passage are walled with slanting poles, the top of which is 7 or 8 feet in vertical distance from the ground level ; these lean on vertical posts about 4 feet high, and have horizontal pole struts lashed on both sides by *siari* thongs ; the passage is thus 1½ feet wide at ground level and 4½ feet wide at the top of the walls. At ground level, tufts of grass are fastened under the bottoms of the slanting walls to form fringes meeting in the centre of the trench and concealing its existence. This passage and trench are called *horrpanch* in Gondi and *onhakodra* or *halkodra* in Halbi. At dawn the cultivators creep up to the 'road', and if there are any deer-tracks in the sand they make all the noise they can, and the deer, if still inside the fence, dash for the trenched passage, and fall through the grass floor into the spiked trench.

---

[1] *Dim* means penis.

The illustration opposite shows a panther trap erected at Handawada in 1934 to catch a small panther that had been carrying off village poultry. Between a double row of thick bamboo stockading standing from 50 to 53 inches above the ground and roughly lashed together about 32 inches above the ground, with lengths of split bamboo twisted round every fourth or fifth bamboo, were two fall beams weighted in the middle with heavy stones, and a little over 18 feet long, called *halh-panj*. The stockading was strengthened by boulders piled around its base. The farther end of the *halh-panj* beams rested on the ground and the front end was raised about 20 inches above the mouth of the stockading by a cross-beam of timber 7½ feet long called *adam-guryu*. The farther end of this cross-beam itself rested on the ground beyond the off side of the mouth of the stockading, whence it slanted upwards at an angle of 30 degrees between the second and third posts of the stockading walls, resting 19 inches above the ground on a horizontal bamboo pole 34 inches long called *mirpos-kola*. The *mirpos-kola* ran along and parallel to the near wall of the stockading, with its centre resting in a fork half-way up a post planted in the ground, the *mirpos-rai*. The *adam-guryu* cross-beam rested on the front end of the *mirpos-kola* bamboo; to the back end was tied a piece of *siari* twine about 9 inches long with a short stick at the end to serve as a release-trigger. As in the hare-trap, one end of this trigger was held vertically under the 'tap' of a bamboo *dim-kola*, while the other end was held from escaping inwards from under the 'tap' by being thrust outwards by the near end of a piece of bamboo laid as a bait-stick across the floor of the trap; the off end of the bait-stick was fixed against the inside off wall of the stockading. The *dim-kola* tap-stick was 12 inches from top to ground, into which it

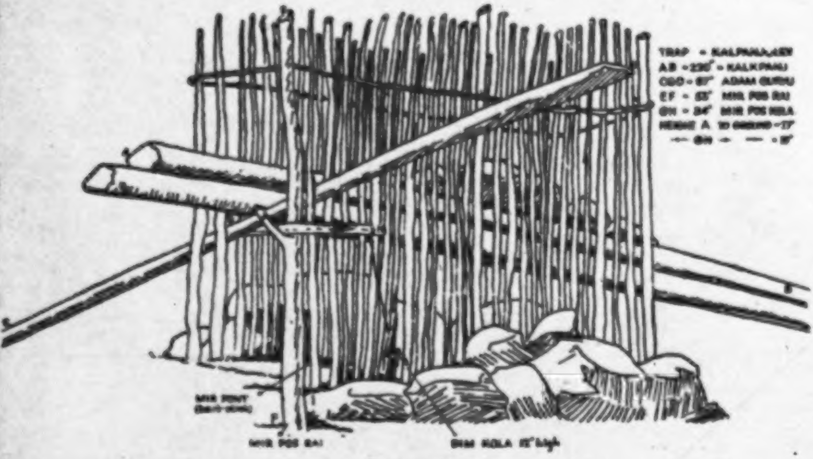


FIGURE 8
(Drawn by Mrs. A. M. Boyes)

was firmly driven outside the near wall of the stockading and between the stockading and the retaining boulders; the 'tap' was about 4 inches above the ground-level. The ground was slotted across the mouth of the stockading from the point where the *adam-guryu* cross-beam rested on the ground, so that that beam, when released, might fall into the slot. The bait-stick and the floor of the trap below it were baited with very 'high' dead mice and their guts; the Marias evidently believed that panthers shared their own partiality for these delicacies. If any animal had put his head inside the stockading and touched the bait, he would have been bound to dislodge the bait-stick. This would have deprived the lower end of the trigger of its support; the upper end, deprived of the resistance of the lower end against the bait-stick, would have

224 sprung free of the ' tap ' of the *dim-kola* and so released the back end of the *mirpos-kola*, the front end of which would have given way beneath the weight of the *adam-guryu* cross-beam and brought the stone-weighted *kalk-panj* fall beams crashing down on to the animal, while the *adam-guryu* fell into the slot prepared for it in the ground. The trap had been set for six weeks with no result, and they had not tried making a trap of this kind for years. It looked too fragile for any but a very small panther ; the bait-stick was barely 2½ feet from the mouth of the trap ; and the fall even at the mouth was only 20 inches. Kalmu Boda, the expert *shikari* who is *pargana* headman of the Bison-horn villages around Barsur, was openly scornful.

Snares and springes for pea-fowl, jungle-fowl and snipe, and bird-lime for other birds, with occasional nets for birds or deer complete the Hill Maria's hunting equipment. I have not seen him using nets ; the villages where most nets are to be seen are those near the Bison-horn country, and their users presumably copy Bison-horn methods.

Bison-horn Maria hunting

In the most advanced and thickest populated parts of the Bison-horn Maria country, such as the Paknar, Katakalian and Kuakonda tracts, it is difficult to find any wild creature except birds and insects. In Hindu India the monkey is always present, being sacred and so free to devour anyone's crops. The Maria eats monkey as readily as any other animal, and the monkey long ago decided to avoid his lands. At my camp at Katakalian there was a sudden shout and dozens of Marias left me to rush at a tree on which someone had seen a luckless flying squirrel (*Pteromys petaurista*). Even hares and rats are said to be less common here than elsewhere. Like Hill Marias, Bison-horn Marias spend hours digging out field rats and [252] mice, carefully wrapping each victim in grass before carrying them home in glee to roast them whole skewered on bamboo spits, singeing off the fur. They sell and buy rat meat in the markets, either raw, or in little jerked squares on bamboo spits ; but that [195] they are getting sensitive to ridicule on this account is shown by the fact that the buyer must ask for ' earth-roots ', not rats or mice. Frogs are another delicacy, also spitted and roast. Python, *daman* [252] and non-poisonous snakes are eagerly sought after ; for ordinary eating they skin, slice and fillet the snake and stew it with spices, when they say it tastes midway between fish and chicken. Small portions of python separately cooked are regarded as a valuable cure for ' pot-belly '.

The great round of ritual vernal hunts preceding sowing have been the chief cause of the extermination of game. The religious aspect of these will be explained in a later chapter. But for these *parad* (Halbi) or *weta* (Bison-horn Maria) whole villages or *parganas* used to turn out all their able-bodied males, and beat over a stretch of jungle ten miles long and a mile wide into nets with spearmen standing ready behind them to slay every animal that escaped the arrows of the beaters, who often fired the forest grasses as they went. Stops were put out along the flanks, and the beating was expert. It is not unnatural that game was rapidly exterminated. For some years they attempted to come in large *weta* parties to the well-stocked jungles in the Muria country of the northern plateau; 500 bowmen and spearmen from Chhitapur and Killepal *parganas* were stopped in 1929 by the Bhanpuri police from raiding the Amraoti Forest Reserve in Kondagaon tahsil, a sportsman's paradise full of buffalo, bison, barasing and all the deer of Central India. They now know that they must confine their *weta* to their own *pargana*, but they feel this to be a hardship. In the Kuakonda *pargana* they have had perforce, as there is no game left, to give up the *Jur-weta*, the hunt in which the whole *pargana* joined a week after the chief village hunt, the *Wijja-weta* or Seed-Hunt. At Killepal in 1930 they said that for some years they had secured no game except a hare in the *Wijja-weta*, though they had gone out for it; in a little while in such regions the ceremonial hunts will end, except the *Kare-weta* or Grass Hunt, which precedes the *Kare Pandum* or Grass-cutting Festival some time before the *Wijja-weta*, and in which they beat the fields for hares, rats and quail.

Where there is still ample game, they hold the *weta* as of old, if perhaps on a smaller scale, with the *Jur-weta* becoming a thing of the past. Kalmu Boda, the *pargana* headman of Barsur *pargana*, and the Bison-horn Marias of the *pargana*, especially those of Boda's village of Pharaspal and the surrounding villages, have the hereditary reputation of being the most skilful netters of tiger and other game in the State, and for many years the State authorities have requisitioned their willing help in getting rid of man-eating tigers in northern Bastar. They hunt in this way for sheer sport, not merely as part of the ritual round of the year. In May 1932, I was a guest with others at a shoot arranged by my successor at Koilibera in North Antagarh to get rid of some troublesome man-eaters; and, to assist, Kalmu Boda had marched over 100 miles from Pharaspal with 140 Bison-horn netmen. As it was essential to get rid of the pests, we could not unfortunately let Boda organize the beats as he would have done if left to himself; a line of guns in the usual *machans* was posted in front, but Boda posted his nets and men behind them. The nets are arranged in a line about five feet above the ground on bamboo props, and secured at intervals to trees;

224 they must be loose enough to fall on any animal driven into them by the beaters and entangle it. Some twenty paces behind the nets the Marias make little shelters of leaves, about fifteen yards apart, carefully camouflaged from the front, and in these shelters groups of four or five spearmen stand motionless. They do not move till an animal is clearly entangled in the net, but then there is a rush of men to have the honour of the first spear. The first man stabs and holds the animal down with his spear, while the others blood their spears. He gets as his portion the off hind leg from buttock to hough, the headman gets the saddle, and the *waddai* or clan-priest the liver, the portion usually given to the Departed. At Koilibera I saw deer, four-horned antelope and a panther netted in this way and duly dispatched. On the last day a tiger, shot at but missed twice from the *machans* in front, hurled itself at full gallop into the net twenty yards to the right front of the shelter where I was standing with a group of spearmen. It fell headlong, and the net fell on to it according to rule; but unfortunately at that point the rope meshes were old and brittle, and the ground rocky and grassless; the tiger's weight and speed smashed the retaining rope and burst a hole through the net. There was a brief vision of a mighty forearm sweeping aside the encumbrance, and the tiger was free; he rushed roaring by the side of the next clump of spearmen, so close that they could have touched him. Wisely all stood stock still from the moment when the tiger entered the net till it had passed them; but then one of the guns from a back *machan* not so wisely fired over the heads of the line of spearmen. Whether he hit the tiger or not, he enraged it, and it swung round to charge. Those of us on the ground with rifles could not fire at first because the tiger was not clear of the line of spearmen; but a rain of rather wild bullets, one of which broke the tiger's near forearm, checked him, and Kalmu Boda gave it the *coup de grâce* (possibly saving more than one life) by hitting it in the neck with a contractile bullet fired from an ancient twelve-bore gun, rusty and unoiled, with barrels patched with rough iron bands and held together with wire, and as loose in the breech and stock as a gun could be. The bullet killed the tiger outright. Boda had missed twice and misfired once before the final shot. The Murias and Marias present drummed the tiger back to camp with their usual anapaestic rhythm, and the Marias broke into a dance, advancing and retreating before the dead tiger to the same anapaestic drumbeats.

The Bison-horn Maria is an adept at nets and snares of all kinds and sizes for all manner of game. Kalmu Boda has recipes for poisoning tiger and other game. For poisoning arrows they use
411
278 occasionally the crushed seeds of the *Abrus precatorius* shrub;

the seeds are small, shiny and scarlet, with black eyes, and are used 411
as beads in Bastar and many parts of the Central Provinces. For 278
poisoning tiger they 'salt' the flesh of a kill with the poisonous [224]
leaves, bark and roots of the shrub *dual bito* (Halbi *bag mohra*; *Alstonia neriifolia*) mixed with quicklime.

C. *Domestication of Animals*

Pigs

Pork is a major item in the dietary of Hill and Bison-horn 262
Marias. At the end of marches in the Abujhmar hills I always paid 231
for a pig for the carriers from the preceding camp to roast and eat before dispersing to their villages; and it is sound to provide the Marias or Murias called out for any State work with pork at the beginning and end of the work. The best fattened hog[1] is very cheap and goes a long way. The housing and feeding of pigs have already been described[2]; cared for in this way, even the domestic India pig is not necessarily the foul worm-ridden pest that he becomes in the low caste quarters of the towns and villages of British India, and in fact in Abujhmar villages his quarters are often cleaner than the houses.

Nearly all young boars are gelded, but a few are left entire for 232
sacrifices in honour of the clan-god and the Village Mother to whom neither Hill nor Bison-horn Maria would offer a hog. The Hill Maria lays the boar on its back, ties its front legs to a post, and stretches out its back legs, while another draws out its penis (*dim*) and crushes its testicles (*merrsheng*) with stones. They say that gelding improves the flavour of pork, and the only boars ever eaten
are those sacrificed. A hog is always part of the Hill Maria bride- [583]
price. Hill Marias call a hog *badiali padi* or *kuna padi*, and Bison-horn *badiali padi*; boars they respectively call *charhal padi* and *kural padi*.

Cooked pig's lard is kept in many Hill Maria houses as a salve 757
for sore eyes and cuts.

Poultry

They keep numbers of poultry similar in breed and appearance 235
to the red jungle fowl. The Hill Maria's hen-coops have been described on page 104. Cocks and hens are taken to the field houses, and roost there below the sleeping platforms. *Korr-guda*, funnel-shaped nests on bamboo posts about two feet high, are kept in every Hill Maria house, and by many Bison-horn Marias. Jungle cock visit the *penda* plots and fight the domestic cocks in the early morning; the Hill Marias say that if a jungle cock crosses a domestic hen the eggs are not fertile.

---

[1] 'Hog' is used in its technical sense, of a gelded boar.

[2] See pp. 103 and 120.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

541 Cock-fighting is the favourite pastime of the Bison-horn Marias, well-known venues being the weekly markets at Kuakonda, Paknar, Kukanar, Bastanar Ghat and near Karli, among several others. They tie iron knives to the cocks' legs. If the cocks break away, their owners pick them up and rub their hackles or spit into their beaks to get their blood up. The defeated cock always becomes the property of the victor's owner. On any market morning you can see scores of Bison-horn Marias walking to market with cocks tucked under their arms. Hill Marias do not themselves go in much for this pastime; only a few of them even stay to watch cock-fighting at Dhaurai market. Some of the Kutru Hill Marias attend cock-fighting every week at Oikal in the Ahiri zamindari of Chanda.

Goats

231 614 Goats are seldom kept by the Hill Marias, though at Nugur in the Indrawati valley the Parllo clan, despite the fact that its totem is the goat, kept goats for the Teli tradesmen who owned the village rice bins described on page 102; but they could not eat goat flesh or even take goat milk.

Among the Bison-horn Marias, many, including even those who belong to the goat phratry and goat clans, keep goats and use goat milk; but totemistic rules prohibit members of goat clans and phratry from eating goat flesh.

Cattle and buffaloes

231 As has been seen, the Hill Marias are not rich in cattle, do not milk them or yoke them to carts or ploughs, and generally keep Rawat herdsmen to tend them. Nearly all eat beef whenever they can afford it. Bullock or cow sacrifice is almost an essential part of funeral ceremonies, and all present eat the meat. Dead cattle are divided up and eaten; at Kutru, Hill Marias ate all that remained of a cow killed by a family of man-eating tigers, though the mangled remains had been gnawed by hyaenas and jackals, and exposed to the sun for four or five days till full of flies and maggots. The headmen of the villages of Padalibhum, Tapalibhum, Behramar, Nurbhum and Sonpur Mar *parganas* frankly admitted that they liked eating beef when they could get it; at Handawada, on the other side of the hills, the headmen of the Dantewara Mar and Mangnar *pargana* villages asserted that they never eat dead cattle, and only eat the beef of sacrificed animals. There are practically no buffaloes in the Abujhmar hills.

231 439 The Bison-horn Marias are great stock-raisers, both of cattle and buffaloes, and they export many head of cattle to Chanda and Raipur, as well as over the Madras border; in fact the land revenue is often paid out of the price received for cattle, and one of their favourite grievances is the cattle export duty of a rupee or two
231 imposed by the State. They use cattle for ploughing and are

231 beginning to use carts, but many villages still keep Rawats to tend and milk their cattle and manufacture ghee. They are inveterate eaters of beef, not only at funeral ceremonies or when raising a stone for the dead, but at *pandum* ceremonies, family or clan gatherings, the completion of a new tank and similar occasions. Most villages have a rocky place set apart for skinning and eating cattle. They are reluctant to kill and eat only their own cattle; [674] on the borders of the Jagdalpur Muria country, especially at the time of the *pandum*, they often attempt to steal young heifers or calves from the nearest Muria or non-Muria village: I had once to impose a collective fine on the villagers of Nennor for hiring two men who had been convicted for two or three former thefts to go to the Muria village of Erokot and steal a bullock, which was the mainstay of the Nennor new-eating feast.

231 Hill and Bison-horn Marias keep tame dogs and cats, and the dogs of the latter are often well-trained hunting dogs who will go 224 with their masters in a beat without giving tongue.

Dogs and cats

Bison-horn Marias coax a dog to them by calling '*Durro*,[1] *durro!*' and a cat (*pusali*) by '*Mini*,[1] *mini!*' while '*Darra, darra!*' is used for driving a dog off.

Other pets

Bison-horn Marias occasionally keep parrots and bulbuls, and some of them use hawks for catching quail and other small birds.

D. *Fishing*

227 All Marias make their own rods of bamboo and lines of *kosa* silk; the hooks are generally in these days bought in the markets, but occasionally thorns are said to be used. They use rods only in the rains, and bait their hooks with worms or with *konda*, a paste of rice chaff.

226 The Kuruk or Jaralur are the Maria fishing caste of the big river valleys, speaking the Gondi dialect of the neighbouring villages. The Kuruks of the Indrawati valley from Nelasnar to 564 Bhamragarh are scarcely distinguishable from the Hill Marias in appearance and customs, but the Hill Marias look down on them and do not allow inter-marriage; like those of potters and blacksmiths, their houses are carefully segregated from Maria houses. They maintain ferry services in their dug-out canoes on the Indrawati, [491] and are paid an annual retainer in grain by the Hill Maria villages which frequent Gidam, Nelasnar, Bhairamgarh and Kutru

---

[1] I have since heard *Durro* and *Mini* used in the same way not only by Gonds but by Korkus also in the Hoshangabad district of the Central Provinces.

226 markets. The Kuruks go up into the hills to collect these dues, and they also dry fish and bring it round from village to village in 564 the hills, bartering it for grain, generally at the rate of five pieces the size of a finger for a *paili*[1] of *kutki*; the Hill Marias allow them to sleep in the *peih-gotul* rest-house. They are expert with net and with rod and line. Frequently they stretch a cord over the head of a pool with several short lengths of line ending in baited hooks depending at intervals in the water, while they go across the tail of the pool in their dug-out canoes spanking the surface of the water with their paddles or with long bamboos to drive the fish up towards the baits. They fish simultaneously several little rods tied to clumps of rushes or reeds. They certainly catch fish at all times except in high floods, and send them alive to your camp in water in little dug out sections of trees. As boatmen they are expert in [501] managing their clumsy and heavy dug-outs, which are generally made of *Bombax malabaricum* wood owing to the heavy duty [651] charged by the Forest Department for the far more durable teak. I spent nearly three weeks in their charge in November 1927 with Dr. W. P. S. Mitchell, the State Medical Officer, journeying in their dug-outs down the Indrawati from Kutru to the Jitam rapids, whence they returned to their villages. They were expert in [501] shooting rapids even with two dug-outs lashed together, which they sometimes took through the wild tangle of rapids above Bhamragarh with two paddlers standing in the bows and two in the stern. The paddles are rectangles of teak nailed to teak handles. One dug-out would shoot ahead to explore the rapids, and its owner appear suddenly on the top of a rock to shout directions to the rest; old Kuruks and their grey-headed wives would appear out of tributary streams from riparian villages and croak away their greetings in the guttural Hill Maria dialect, and then paddle back upstream in the [374] morning mist with charcoal or wood smoking around them in broken earthen crocks at the bottom of their boats, carried for warmth. At dusk, after escorting us to our camp on the Bastar bank, they invariably would paddle croaking off to rocky islands in midstream, whence at night the eye would be delighted with their numerous fires of driftwood and the ear with the melodious refrains of their songs.

226 The Hill Marias make various forms of fish cages and traps with reeds and cane. They dam river shallows in the hot weather and poison the pools. In the rains they make *goria* piers of boulders in cylindrical wicker-work baskets, like the piers of their bridges, between which is laid a platform of wicker-work, the upstream end of which rests on the bed of the stream, and is weighted down with

---

[1] A measure containing about 4 lb. weight of grain.

stones; the platform is thus sloped against the stream, and small fish coming down are unable to get through the meshes of the wicker-work, and are thrown by the water high and dry on to the downstream end of the platform; this is merely an elaboration of the *dandar* trap regularly made in the plains by other Koitor at corners of rice-fields where there is any considerable fall in the level of a main irrigation current. 226

The Bison-horn Marias have four or five different kinds of nets, and field fish traps of three or four kinds varying in size from the big field *dandar* above to the *bisar*, a small cylindrical trap of reeds or canes fastened together with wefts of cord, with inverted cones of similar construction inside; the narrow mouth at one end of the trap is fixed close to a small hole made through the embankment of a flooded rice field, and the small fry washed through the hole into the trap cannot escape through the cones. Women make a series of small mud dams across the swampy ends of tanks or pools, and dry out the space enclosed by each dam in turn by throwing the water out with winnows or baskets; they then collect what fish are left in the mud.

In the north of the State the Bhattras, Parjas, Murias and low-caste Hindus always precede the ceremonial eating of new mangoes at Aktai, the local name for the Hindu festival of Akshya Trittya, which falls usually in the second fortnight of April, by a ceremonial *parad* for fish; their general method is for all the men to go into the forest to gather the leaves, roots and fruits used for poisoning fish, then to poison the selected and previously dammed rivulet or small tank; after the stupefied fish have been collected and divided, each family cooks and eats the fish with the new mangoes, and the head of the family goes to the source of their usual water-supply and offers water in a new *handi* with a little grain in the name of the ancestors. In Gondi this is called the ceremony of '*Yer upilona pen hanal*' (offering water to the clan-god and the Departed). Some Bison-horn Marias observe this practice also before their own Marka Pandum, or New Mango Festival, but they prefer having a real beat for fish to poisoning pools, though both they and the Hill Marias frequently poison pools. But most Bison-horn Marias beat for fish at all times of the year, except the rains, when there is too much water, just for sport, and join for this with villagers of other castes, such as Jhari Telanga, Halba or Parja. As many as fifty or sixty square-meshed nets are collected, about four feet deep, and the bottoms of the nets are weighted with stones, while pieces of wood are fastened on the top edge to act as floats. Before the nets are arranged in the water, the *perma* (village priest or spiritual headman, corresponding in Bison-horn villages to the

226
769
226

Hill Maria *kasyeq-gaita*) of the village where the beat is to take place sets up a small bough of *jamun* (*Eugenia jambolana*) or *jamela* (*Eugenia heyneana*) on the bank of the river, beneath which he places an egg and a little husked *kutki* in an egg shell, and prays to *Jalkanya*, the Water-maiden, for good fishing ; if the beat is successful, the *perma* after it is over breaks the egg and spills the yoke and the *kutki* on the ground in her name. The nets are lowered into the water tied together in a long line across the river, with side-nets (*kanasi*) at right angles on both sides of the main net towards the line of beaters, if the river is too wide or there is much water near the banks too shallow for the main net to be stretched from bank to bank. A line of men stands behind the nets, and three or four hundred yards away the beaters form a line across the river from bank to bank, and advance towards the line of nets, beating the water with hands, sticks and bamboos, and shouting and beating drums. The fish are divided up in the village, the *perma* and *pala* and those who have provided nets getting double shares ; if a tank is beaten, the owner of the tank gets a double share. These beats are at times quite exciting and the catch is heavy, as shown by the following account of an eyewitness, Dr. W. P. S. Mitchell :—

> 'On Christmas Day 1921 we were encamped at Salnar, a village on the banks of the Indrawati about nine miles from Barsur. The river here is only 3½ or 4 feet deep, and breaks up into two streams divided by a sand spit. The surroundings are beautiful, with a clear view of the Korekal Mad waterfall seven or eight miles away. The river was ideal for the fishing *parad*, which began early in the morning and lasted till sundown, with a short break for a midday meal. We spent the whole day on the sand spit, watching the great catches of fish. The people of this locality are Bison-horn Marias, and the method of the *parad* was very like that of an ordinary beat for game ; a main net about 15 yards wide was sunk across the river upstream, its bottom weighted with stones and the ends tied with cords to enable it to be lifted, while some ten men held the top. From the ends of the net other cords, to which were fastened at every few inches bunches of dry palm leaves and stone weights, were strung out by men in dug-out canoes in a semi-circle for 30 or 40 yards on each side, and placed in charge of stops aligned from one end to the other of each string ; the task of these stops was slowly to draw in the strings towards the main net after the beat had begun, and so keep the fish within a circumscribed area. The main line of beaters numbered about twenty, each armed with a small triangular net fastened on a triangle of stout sticks, with a fourth stick fastened at the apex as a handle. Behind them a second line of beaters, but fewer in number, followed at a distance of two yards, carrying triangular nets of the same type but without handles. As the first line beaters advanced they held their nets in front of them under the water by the handles, while those in the second line advanced with their nets held straight out in front of them and against their bodies. The object of the front line was only to drive the fish forward into the main net, and to sweep up with their own nets any fish which might try to rush back at the end of the beat ; the second line had to be on the look out for any fish which might jump clear over the backs of the front line when collared in their nets. It was only the large fish, generally mahseer, which when backing from the main net to meet the nets of the front line beaters jumped clear out of the water towards the second line. It was really wonderful to watch the dexterity

with which the second line dealt with these fish, some of which weighed from ten to fifteen pounds, and required all the handling that the men were capable of; even then many were dropped from sheer weight. In all, more than 300 fish, of all sizes, were caught in the day, enough to provide ample food for a week for everyone present. The Marias were delighted.' 226

For poisoning fish all or some of the following[1] are used:— 278
korkati (3, 5) leaves and twigs; fruit of the *masiya* (1), *kirach* (1) (*Casearia graveolens*), *kothewa* (1), *pendra* (1) (*Randia uliginosa*), 226
koima (3), *iriya* (5), *wasa* (5) or *vachcha* (5), and *kue* (6) (*Randia dumetorum*); roots of the *sirindi* (1, 2), *agya* (1, 3, 4) (*Millettia auriculata*), *korti* (1), *timra* (1, 2) (root-bark), *kewu* (5) (pounded with earth from a white-ant hill), *kumbhi* (1, 5) (root-bark; *Careya arborea*), *tumsi* (5), *basmati* (6), and *batte* (6); bark of the *karra* (1, 3, 6) or *karla*, *kirangi* (4), *kuchali* (5) (*Strychnos nux vomica*) and *muchi-tumri*[2] (5) (*Diospyros montana*), *kodra-marra* (6) and *chil*[3] (6); and the ground oil-cake (1, 5, 6) made from *tora*, the seeds of the *mahua* (*Bassia latifolia*).

The ingredients are pounded together with stones or axe-heads on a rock in or near the pool or tank; if the water is deep, they are thrown into it the night before the fish are collected; if it is shallow, the poisons act in an hour or two and can safely be thrown into the water in the morning. The fish are stupefied by them, and are easily collected floating on the surface.

In the Kolab-Sabari in Sukma zamindari and Konta tahsil, 226
Bison-horn Marias and others have night beats for fish in the hot weather; they call the beats '*chingra parad*' and '*hola parad*'. The late Circle Inspector Chaitan Singh gave the following description of these:—

'The beat must be held on a dark moonless night, and not in a tank or a small nullah or in water flowing over mud which would be stirred up by the feet of the beaters, but in clear shallow water flowing over sand or shingle, not more than thigh-deep. Four or five men enter the water carrying each a bamboo torch, and a basket; the torch is held not more than a foot above

---

[1] The numbers 1 to 6 stand for lists of poisons supplied from 1, Jagdalpur; 2, Sukma; 3, Kondagaon; 4, Dantewara; 5, Konta; and 6, Bijapur. There is almost certainly some duplication owing to the different names prevailing in different parts of Bastar for the same plants. Bastar plant names so differ from those in the Central Provinces that identification is difficult without sending actual specimens to Dehra Dun. The Central Provinces forest lists give as known fish poisons roots of *Millettia auriculata*, fruit of *Casearia graveolens*, *Casearia tomentosa* and *Randia dumetorum*, bark of *Ougeinia dalbergioides*, and leaves and bark of *Cleistanthus collinus*. *Strychnos nux vomica* and *Diospyros montana* are well known as poisonous plants.

[2] *Muchi-tumri* is possibly the same as *timra* in lists 1 and 2.

[3] *Chil*, which occurs only in the Bijapur list, may be the Telugu word *chil* for *Strychnos potatorum*, the clearing nut. The seeds of this are used for clearing muddy water.

226 the water. On each side of each torch-bearer goes a man armed with bow and arrows; for small fish the arrows have heads like the handles of spoons, but for large fish they use arrows with heads with only one wing and barb, like an ordinary arrow-head bisected from point to shank. The torch-bearers and bowmen wade up against the current, and the fish, which at night are feeding in these shallows and not in the deep pools, are attracted or stupefied by the glare and are easily shot with the arrows or caught in the baskets.'

E. *Intoxicants and Other Drinks*

Sago-palm

273 The commonest intoxicant in the Abujhmar hills is the fermented juice of the sago-palm (*Caryota urens*), and the tree is common also in many parts of the Bison-horn Maria country. It is now propagated freely by Hill and Bison-horn Marias. The tree, unlike the toddy-palm, is monoecious. The flowering peduncles, which appear like thin elephant trunks, have their ends cut off before they flower, and act as taps, bamboo tubes being fastened below the cut to catch the sap; the Bison-horn Marias often use earthenware pots. The tubes are emptied in the morning and evening, bamboo poles still retaining the stumps of [272] side-shoots being tied on to the trees as rough ladders. When fresh, the sap is not intoxicating and has a pleasant dry taste, not unlike champagne. After two or three years' tapping the tree dies, when the inner tissue of the stem yields the starchy food substance 754 already mentioned. If the ends of the peduncle get worm- or grub-eaten before they are tapped, it is considered a sure sign of witchcraft, and more than one murder has been recorded on this 534 account. The bottom of the trunk of the dead tree is commonly used as the hollow body of the Hill Maria single-membrane *turam* or kettle-drums.

Toddy-palm

273 The toddy-palm (*Borassus flabellifer*) is not grown or tapped in the Abujhmar hills, but is common in the south of the Bison-horn country especially among the so-called Koyas and the Dorlas, and in Sukma and Konta. In this teluguized region whole villages camp out in the toddy groves from March till June in a perpetual state of semi-intoxication, taking solid food only in the evening, and sometimes going without that for three or four days or even a week. The sap is tapped by cutting the ends of the flowering spadices, in much the same way as the sago-palm; the spadix appears in the male trees from November to March, while the female tree yields sap from April to June. The vessels used to catch the sap are generally thick bamboo tubes three or four feet long, of about three gallons capacity. Excessive tapping soon shortens the life of the trees. The juice rapidly ferments, though not intoxicating when drawn, and fermentation is expedited by the habit of mixing the fresh juice with that left

over from previous days. The female trees bear fruit in May, and 273
the pulp of this is eaten, generally after roasting the fruit on an earthenware crock and breaking off the rind. They also eat the unripe seeds and seedlings, as well as the roots. They collect the seed and leave it to germinate in pits; they propagate the trees also from root cuttings.

Individual ownership in the trees is to some extent recognized, 273
not necessarily, however, in the owner of the land. There is a sort
of village arrangement as to the trees to be tapped by each family, 423
permitting a rough rotation where trees are plentiful, so as to give them a much needed rest from tapping. The Koyas and Dorlas sacrifice a fowl or a goat at the foot of the first tree tapped, and the sacrificial victims are then taken to the Village Mother's shrine and eaten there by the men.

Date-palm The *sindi* (*Phoenix sylvestris*) is occasionally 273
tapped in the Bison-horn country by making an incision in the bark below the crown of the tree.

Mahua The *mahua* (*Bassia latifolia*) is common everywhere except in the Abujhmar hills, and it is the spirit distilled from it that is sold at the State excise shops, except for a few toddy shops around Konta. There is very little illicit distillation, [656]
the State liquor distilled by licensees at outstills being very cheap, and the pass rules enabling Marias fairly easily to get an adequate supply of the spirit for the religious and domestic or social occasions at which its consumption is obligatory. The State does not tax [651]
the tapping of the sago-palm and toddy-palm, but merely tries to prohibit the sale and to limit the quantity of the resulting spirit which individuals may possess.

The Parjas and Bison-horn Marias sometimes make a wine from *mahua*, said to be red in colour, by several successive boilings and strainings of *mahua* flowers. It is called *suram*; I have never been able to get hold of any.

Landa *Landa*, a cause of half the homicide committed in Bastar, is the favourite intoxicant of the Bison-horn Marias, but is taboo to the Hill Maria.[a] It is made of equal portions of husked rice or *kutki* and *mandia* (*Eleusine coracana*). The rice or *kutki* is soaked well in water, strained off and pounded to a paste. The *mandia* grain is first damped and allowed to sprout, then dried in the sun for three or four days, and soaked, strained and pounded like the rice or *kutki*. Both are then well mixed. They then take an earthenware *handi*, with holes in the bottom, and cover the holes with a lattice of bamboo slices, on which they place *siari* leaves. The mixed rice or *kutki* and sprouted *mandia* are piled on these leaves. The *handi* is then placed on a *handi* of

[a] [see cat. 116, p. 421. — Analyst]

273 water, and the latter on the fire, so that the contents of the upper *handi* may be well steamed. When they have been steamed long enough, they are mixed in another *handi* with water to the consistency of *pej* gruel, and left in a cool place to ferment for five or six days, with the top lidded with leaves; when there is a smell like a fowl-house that badly needs cleaning they know that it is ready. *Landa* has to be provided in large quantities for all the guests at a wedding, when open house is kept; all present at funeral ceremonies need it, and some is poured over the menhir erected in the name of the dead man at the *Uraskal*; it is given to all who have worked on a new tank at the completion ceremony; a *handi* full is carried by a lad's father and party when going to ask a man for his daughter as wife for the lad; on the sixth day after a child is born *landa* is given to the man and woman called from each house for the naming; at sowing, reaping, threshing and ploughing a little is given to every helper; and at each *pandum* each household makes and consumes some. At the Kuram Pandum, when the new *kutki* is eaten, the *landa* should be made from new *kutki*.

Other drinks

273 271 There is said to be some creeper from the flowers or sap of which an intoxicating liquor is made by the Bison-horn Marias in the Sukma zamindari, below the Tulsidongri mountains; of this no proof was forthcoming. Possibly the rumour referred to the known habit of the Marias drinking the sap of the wild vine *Vitis repanda* as a substitute for water. Otherwise water is their sole other drink, always from clear running streams, save in the dry southern fringes of the Bison-horn country in Konta tahsil.

Drinking

271 The Hill Maria and the Bison-horn drink after meals. The latter drinks in the normal Indian way, and often from a brass *lota*, or at least a leaf-cup. The former, however, in the remoter villages still almost steals to the edge of the stream like a shy animal, kneels down, and puts his mouth to the water. Otherwise he stands in the water and scoops up water into his mouth with rapid moves of alternate hands.

273 [769] When Bison-horn Marias drink *mahua* spirit, either the head of the family, in case of domestic ceremonies, or every drinker in general drinking bouts, before drinking pours a drop or two on the ground in the name of the Departed. Hill Marias follow the same practice in general drinking bouts, but the libation may be made before or after drinking. The liquor is brought in large earthen pots or in gourd bottles from the nearest liquor-shop. Hill Marias fill large leaf-cups from it, which they take round to all present and from them fill the small leaf-cups which each person has ready for himself; the Bison-horn Maria doles out his liquor either with the

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

273

orke gourd ladle mentioned on page 66 above, or, in these days of sophistication, with a more or less exact imitation, known as a *kal-berris* or wine-ladle, made in bronze by the *cire perdue* process by the Gharwas, about the size of a large meerschaum pipe, with a hollow stem holed on the top of what would be the mouthpiece if it were a pipe; the ' bowl ' is filled with liquor, which is poured out into the drinker's leaf-cup through this hole. Men, young women and girls, and boys drink; and mothers give liquor to their children except those only just born. Girls soon know when they have had enough, but even then never let the wine-bearer pass them without refilling their leaf-cup, which as soon as he has passed by they take over to the youth of their fancy.

CHAPTER IX

DOMESTIC LIFE ; MISCELLANEOUS

A. Treatment of Sickness

164 758 AMONGST the Hindus of the plains the Hill Maria has a great but totally undeserved reputation for his skilful use of herbs and roots to treat the sick. A few chronic sufferers may be met who have migrated to the Abujhmar hills in the fond hope of getting their sufferings mitigated by Maria medicine ; they will readily tell you that the Marias were more ignorant than they themselves, though some have stayed on, finding the simple life and the climate of the hills tonic in themselves. Actually, the helplessness of the Hill Maria in the face of the simplest injury or ailment is pathetic. A simple sore beginning from a thorn in the buttock is neglected, till the whole buttock becomes one vast sore. The commonest and worst disease among them is, or was, yaws ; whole households suffered, and many for the moment apparently free bore on their persons obvious indications that it was only a matter of time before the disease would reappear in the secondary or tertiary state. Innumerable cases came to my camp doctor for treatment in my 1930 tours. I sent him again in the summer of 1930 to tour in the area, and of 280 cases treated by him in 26 villages, 79 were yaws cases ; in his next tour in the same villages, 69 new yaws cases were brought to him. Later tours were undertaken by him and other doctors for injecting yaws patients with salvarsan preparations, with great success ; in my March 1934 return visit to this area I did not see one case, and everywhere the villagers were profuse in their thanks for deliverance from the scourge, for which they had known no antidote or alleviative. It is common also in the hilly parts of the Bison-horn country, and in the lower Indrawati and Godavari valleys, where the Bastar dispensaries get many a yaws patient from the Chanda and East Godavari districts of British India.

164 Syphilis is extremely rare among the Hill Marias ; the 280 cases already mentioned as treated in summer 1930 did not include one case of venereal disease. Where it is common in Bastar the carriers have invariably been either police constables and forest guards or Rohilla and Telugu traders. Hill Marias have luckily been comparatively immune from the attentions of minor State

servants. Though the Bison-horn Marias are not free from either venereal disease or the visits of these gentry, yet they have been fairly successful in keeping their women to themselves, and have suffered little except in the south, where many of them go at times to Dummagudem and other Madras towns for work. If, however, the Telugus have given them venereal disease, they have more than repaid them with yaws. 164

Skin diseases, such as scabies, ringworm and eczema, are common, especially among Bison-horn Marias and Murias, who under Hindu influence are taking to the use of clothes. They cannot afford a change of clothing, and dispensary treatment is defeated at once if the old infected clothing cannot be discarded. Hill Marias wearing only scanty loin-cloths are far less affected; but even among them the 280 cases treated included 10 of scabies, 9 of ringworm and 7 of eczema. [177]

Eye complaints are frequent, owing largely, no doubt, to the habit of living and sleeping in dark unventilated huts and dormitories thick with smoke. The 280 Hill Maria cases included 16 of conjunctivitis, 5 of cataract, and 5 of other eye complaints.

Malaria is very common among the Bison-horn Marias, and in the Bijapur tahsil blackwater fever occurs. The 280 Hill Maria cases included 26 of malaria, only 4 of which were of children with badly enlarged spleens.

Old men and women are frequently seen crippled with rheumatism, and 17 of the 280 cases were of young men suffering from rheumatic complaints. Of the rest of the 280 cases, 24 were badly neglected ulcers, 6 bad foot-cracks, 25 simple stomach complaints, and 9 (including 3 of pyorrhoea) neuralgia from badly decayed teeth. No figures were kept of what is now the most obviously prevalent complaint, hydrocele, because it was impossible to treat this in camp. Glasfurd noted the prevalence of this in the sixties, and wrote in paragraph 66 of his Report that:—

> 'Hydrocele . . . is exceedingly common in the Chintulnar and Soonkum (i.e. Sukma) Talooka, and also around Dantewara and in all parts, indeed, lying adjacent to the Baila Deela range of hills. I should say that from 10 to 20 per cent. of the population in these parts are afflicted in this manner. Their own account of it is that it is caused by drinking the water of nullahs during the freshes.'

To me it now seems commoner in the Hill Maria country than elsewhere. The victims know no cure, and are only beginning to realise that something can be done for it in the dispensaries.

The idea that Marias are expert physicians is an amazing 757
example of the general Hindu ignorance and superstitious dread
of the aboriginal. In actual fact the Maria has only a few queer 752

Maria treatment of disease

751 nostrums like the use of red-ants for fever or python-flesh for
pot-belly already mentioned, and cauterization is the only treat-
752 ment he knows for simple injuries or foot-crack (just
as he brands the flanks of ailing cattle). A Maria
bitten by a rabid dog at His Excellency Sir Montagu
Butler's Christmas camp at Kondagaon in 1927 refused
point blank to be sent out of Bastar to Raipur for Pasteur treatment,
but ultimately as a concession to the general anxiety asked to be
given the body of the dog, and ate its liver.[a] To Marias illness is
754 generally a manifestation of something malignant, either the magic
[787] of a human enemy or the ill-will of a god or spirit. At funerals,
steps are taken to ascertain whether magic was the cause of death ;
in illness a medium is called in, or a *wede* or *gunia* with knowledge
either of spells to defeat the spirits of evil or of the white magic
means of blowing away illness, *jhara phukna*[a]; epidemic or epizootic
755 disease may be defeated either by palisading the village after
sweeping it clean, and posting guards with bows and arrows to
shoot the demons of illness, as was done by Hill Marias in the great
influenza epidemic of 1918, or by special disease-riddance ceremonies
like the annual ceremony described on page 140. Yet such is the
Hindu's faith in their 'medicine' that in 1930 the late zamindar of
Sukma hastened his death when in the last stages of diabetes by
taking the advice of Bison-horn Maria 'doctors' or *gunia* to the
effect that he had two intestines, one of which had withered like
a dead plant, while the other, though withering, was still partly
green and could be revived if the patient fed it with lumps of
black earth.

B. *Manufactures*

1. Basketry

285 In the preceding chapters frequent mention has been made of basketry, for Maria measures, grain bins, walls of houses and fences, dancing shields and so on. The Hill Marias are great basket-workers, men and women. The men make all the big basketry bins for storing grain and the large baskets sold at the markets, as well as dancing shields and fencing and matting ; the women make the basketry measures, basketry plates and the smaller domestic baskets, as well as brooms of various grasses, which are generally plaited together at the top by basketry methods. In camps, Hill Maria youths almost invariably employ any spare time in basket-making. Bison-horn Marias on the contrary leave it almost entirely to their women, except that the men make the basketry caps that are the basis of the *tallagulla* bison-horn dancing headdress, and fencing.

[a] [see cat. 116, p. 421. - Analyst]

The favourite basketry material is bamboo, in thin strips 285 varying from half an inch to three-quarters in width. Occasionally the wefts are of reed, coloured twine, or bamboos pared down to the thickness of twigs. Patterns are produced by using warps of dry bamboo strips from the heart-wood, and wefts of green strips from the outer rind. Nearly all the Hill Maria basketry is twilled, with each weft passing over and then under two or three warps, the topmost edge or rim being twilled-twined with a weft of thin bamboo pared to the size of twigs; and sometimes an ornamental plaited ring is worked around the central circumference. The measure baskets made by the Hill Marias and brought by them to the markets for sale or for measuring out the grain which they sell or the salt which they buy are of different shapes and sizes for each commodity. The grain measure is a *bhurki*, eight of which make 285 a *soli*[1] or half a seer, i.e. a measure containing about a pound's 804 weight of rice. There are slightly different sizes for rice, *kutki*, mustard and pulses, according to the size of the different grains; all *bhurki* measures are little round baskets with slightly convex bottoms and uniform in diameter at top and bottom. For salt, a rather similar basket called a *kochli* is made, sufficient to hold one pice worth of salt, of roughly the same capacity as a *bhurki*; they are graduated for smaller quantities by being plastered inside with varying quantities of mud or cow-dung. *Mahua* flowers are measured by being heaped on shallow dishes called *kurli*, shaped like inverted cones or Annamese hats; each should contain 4 *pailis*, or 128 *bhurkis*, and those that I tested were remarkably accurate. The Hill Marias sell also the flat basket dishes already referred to, but rather larger than those they use for their own plates; they are called *bediya*.

2. Iron-work

Frequent mention has already been made of the Maria black- 326 smiths, and some of their tempering and manufacturing methods have been described in the section dealing with 564 weapons and tools. These blacksmiths appear to be of Maria stock, speaking the Maria language, indistinguishable physically, having the same phratries and clans, and following the same customs. Enquiry in the big blacksmith settlements at Bagmundi Panera in Jagdalpur tahsil, at Kamargudem below the Aranpur ghat in Konta tahsil (both Bison-horn blacksmith villages), and from the Hill Maria blacksmiths at Nugur in Kutru zamindari, showed in every case that some of the blacksmiths either had themselves once been cultivators or had fathers who were originally

---

[1] 5 *tola* or Government rupees' weight of rice is contained in one *bhurki*: 8 *bhurki* = 1 *soli*, 4 *soli* = 1 *paili*, 2 *paili* = 1 *ori*, 2 *ori* = 1 *kurli*, 20 *ori* = 1 *khandi* = 40 *paili*.

326 564 cultivators. In some cases they had obtained cultivators' daughters as wives; but these appeared all to be run-away matches without the consent of the girls' parents; in other cases cultivators had become blacksmiths in order to marry blacksmiths' daughters. Halba and Telanga neighbours refer to them often as Kammar by caste; but so far as the word can be used of them, it is clearly rather an occupational term. Yet for some reason the aboriginal everywhere looks down on the smith, and as soon as a Maria takes to this occupation he must live with his fellow-smiths either in a separate village or hamlet, or segregated in a separate part of the village.

[135] 326 316 423 Almost all parts of Bastar are full of iron ore, some of it among the finest and purest in the world. But the Maria smiths cannot deal in their rough smelting furnaces with anything but the friable haematite ores, yellow ochre in colour, which they either collect where it lies in exposed lumps or dig from shallow hillside pits. As the ore is a part of the soil, and the soil is the property of the clan-priest vested in the *kasyeq-gaita* of a Hill Maria or the *perma* of a Bison-horn village, the chief of the smiths has to ask the permission of the *kasyeq-gaita* or *perma* to dig ore just as the relatives of a man of another clan dying in the village have to ask his permission to bury the man in the clan-earth. The smiths have generally to pay for this permission by contributing a sacrificial pig at the annual harvest-home festival of the clan-god; and at this festival the smiths pray to the clan-god to give them good iron in [754] the coming year. If smelting produces bad iron, witchcraft is at once suspected, and a medium consulted. Men, women and children mine or collect the ore, which is soft enough to be dug easily with the ordinary hoe, and broken up with the blunt end of the pointed hammer (*mutti*) used by all Maria smiths. It may be added here that they get an annual fee in grain at harvest from all Maria villagers, in return for which they are expected to sharpen, re-temper or repair tools and weapons, and a fee, generally in grain, for all new tools and weapons. They also manufacture for direct sale in the markets.

325 Having collected the ore, the smith collects a supply of bark for roasting the ore before smelting, and makes a supply of charcoal (*bugi*). For the former purpose he prefers the bark of the sacred *saja* tree, and the roasting changes the colour of the ore from yellow ochre to deep burnt sienna. For smelting he makes charcoal from *karra* wood, unless he can get tamarind, and for refining from *mahua* wood. It takes two or three men a day to cut the wood; they use green *karra* logs eighteen inches or two feet in girth, and dead *mahua* wood. They cut up the *karra* into billets about eighteen inches long,

each of which they split in two. These are piled on dry faggots, and covered over with dry brushwood, and burnt; when they think that they have been burnt long enough, they plaster wet mud over the heaps to prevent the escape of smoke, and leave them all night. Meanwhile they make the *mahua* charcoal, burning the heaps of dry logs and pouring water over the glowing embers; this can be collected overnight, but the *karra* charcoal is not ready till the morning.

They build a cylindrical furnace (*garum*) of clay, generally some 3½ feet high and tapering upwards, with a circumference at the base of nearly 5 feet and at the top of nearly 3 feet. At the back of the furnace a bamboo matting plastered with mud about 6 feet long and 3 feet broad is inclined from the mouth of the furnace at an angle of 35 or 40 degrees, and supported on four sticks fixed in the ground; this is called a *dikki*, and serves as a feeder. In front of the base of the furnace a hole is made for the blast, and at the side of the base a hole to serve as a flue for the slag; this flue is called *hackping*. It is plugged at first with wet clay, when the furnace is filled with fuel. The bellows (*arrangang*) are made from two sections of tree trunk about a foot in diameter and three inches thick; these are 'dug out' with axes or burnt out till the bottom is about an inch thick, and the tops are then lidded with cow-hide tied round the edge like the paper tops of English jam-jars. In the centre of each hide a small hole (*bukka*) is made, and one end of a two feet length of cord is passed through this and fixed to a short stick resting against the inside of the hide; the other end is tied to the end of a bamboo springe stick fastened at an angle to the ground in the earth behind the bellows. Each hide is soaked in water before use. The two bellows are placed side by side flat on the ground, and from holes in the front of their wooden walls two hollow bamboo tubes about two feet long converge to meet at the blast hole of the furnace, or rather at an earthen pipe made in prolongation of this hole; the pipe is made of wet clay plastered round a core of leaves; one end is plastered to the blast hole with clay, and the leaf core is then removed.

The bottom of the furnace is filled with a mixture of rice chaff and about a pound of *karra* charcoal broken small; this is fired through the bellows hole by blowing lighted charcoal through the earth pipe or *tuyère*, but the furnace is first filled to the brim with *karra* charcoal piled on the mixture of charcoal and chaff. The smith stands with one foot on each bellows, and depresses each in turn with alternate foot, supporting himself with a stick held in each hand; as his foot descends it closes the *bukka* hole, and the air is forced through the bamboo pipe and the earth *tuyère* into the

325 furnace, which is soon in full blast: the depression of the bellows also depresses the end of the springe stick, which springs up as soon as the pressure of the foot is released and so lifts the hide with it and allows the bellows to get a fresh charge of air.

Meanwhile the iron ore after its preliminary burning in *saja* bark has been broken up with the hammer into small lumps and mixed with charcoal, the mixture being placed in readiness on the *dikki* feeder platform. When the furnace has been in blast for about fifteen minutes and the charcoal in it about half burnt, the assistant slowly passes the mixed ore and charcoal down the feeder into the mouth of the furnace, until none is left. After an hour, one of the men clears the clay plaster from the mouth of the slag flue, below which a little trench about six inches wide has been dug, and the slag falls through the flue into this trench. The heat is sometimes so great that the bellows man, instead of holding a support stick in both hands, holds in one a winnow or a piece of matting which he uses as a fan on his body. The whole furnace is generally roofed over as a protection from the sun; and in the hot weather, if smelting is unavoidable, it is done at night, though during the *mahua* and forest fruit collection season in March and April all the forges and furnaces are closed down. Smelting takes 3½ hours, and in the winter one lot of ore is smelted at dawn and another in the afternoon. They keep a small stock of ore for smelting in the rains, when they believe it useless to look for good ore.

After the 3½ hours' smelting the rough spongy bloom of iron that results is removed from the furnace to an ordinary open forge, where it is re-smelted in *mahua* charcoal and beaten out with the *mutti* hammer on a boulder of stone; this refining takes about an hour.

A furnace of this kind takes about 50 lb. of charcoal and 26 lb. of ore; it yields about 8 lb. of bloom, which on refining produces 4 lb. of iron, still more waste comes from which when it is worked up into implements.

326 The open forge which he uses for refining or for ordinary smithy work the Maria smith calls *o'idal*, the word used for the domestic hearth. He digs a small hole with the pointed end of his *mutti* hammer, crushes the earth so excavated with the blunt end of the hammer and makes it into mud with water. A little mud is smeared on the lip of the hole and the end of a stick laid on this, over which more mud is plastered till it is covered with a firm little mound of mud; the stick must slope downwards towards the centre of the hole. The stick is then worked round and round in the little mound of mud to make a firmly consolidated air passage through it,

and removed. This air passage serves for the forge the same purpose as the earthen pipe *tuyère* for the smelting furnace, and the bamboo pipes of the bellows are arranged to converge at its entrance. The hole originally excavated is filled with *mahua* charcoal. 326

The smiths' only tools, which they make themselves, are the pointed and blunt ended hammer or *mutti* already mentioned, and long iron pincers with long noses, which they call *andes*. They generally have large and small hammers. The haft is inserted in a hole right through the maximum thickness of the head, at a point about a third of its length from the broad flat end; the remaining two-thirds tapers to a rough point.

3. Brass-work

The brass workers already frequently mentioned, unlike the blacksmiths, are by now practically a distinct caste. Hindus and Murias call them Ghasias, which is the name applied elsewhere in Central India, Chhota Nagpur and Orissa to one of the lowest and most degraded of the untouchable castes, whose usual occupation is grass-cutting and horse-tending, while some sections make combs for the hair or for weavers' looms. Even in Bastar, where many of them are skilled artisans, the wildest Maria holds them in profound contempt. The Maria calls them Gharwa. In outward appearance there is little difference between them and their Muria or Maria neighbours, and probably in the remote past they may have been recruited from these or other aboriginal stocks. Rohilla traders and oppressive zamindari managers in the past have often employed Ghasia duns to extract money from Marias; such is the Maria's feeling of degradation if a Ghasia comes near his house that the villagers would combine to pay a miserable rupee or two to these extortioners to get rid of their foul presence. 326 564

The Gharwas buy old brass or bronze in the markets or through Hindu middlemen. They make their brass ornaments, spoons, bells and Muria hunting horns by the *cire-perdue* process. The first or inner core of their moulds is made of earth from white-ants' hills, and known as *mati-kutan*; the earth is puddled with water and moulded to the needed shape in the hands. This is dried in the sun, and when hard covered with a coating of beeswax, on which the desired pattern is made in relief with long thin threads or small pellets of beeswax; various patterns can be produced by whipping these threads round the circumference of the *mati-kutan* core, or applying them on the sides of its plain wax covering in coils, spirals, suns, moons, lozenges, twined, or in any other pattern; and the pellets are used to produce bands of dots. The wax is warmed till it is pliant in the hands, and then forced through a tool called a 326 [439]

326 *pichki* for the making of these thin wax threads. The *pichki* consists of two parts each shaped like the letter T, but with a short stem and the cross-piece or handle three times as long as the stem. One T-piece is entirely of hard wood, handle and stem being cylindrical and smoothly rounded; but the stem of the second T-piece is hollowed so that the solid stem of the first may fit closely in it, and at its bottom it has a brass cap with holes like the lid of a pepper pot. A lump of soft wax is placed in this hollow stem, and then the solid stem of the other T-piece is fitted into the hollow socket, and the Gharwa presses the two cross-piece handles together in one hand, so as to force wax through the perforations like meat through a mincing machine.

When the core has been covered with wax and the wax pattern, it is known as *main-kutan*, *main* meaning wax. The *main-kutan* is covered over closely with another layer of white-ant clay with a drain-hole left at one end; this clay must be pressed firmly on to the wax pattern, to take the impress of it. It is dried and heated enough to melt the wax, which is run off from the drain-hole. It remains to replace the melted wax with molten metal. The *main-kutan* as it stands is not strong enough, and so it is again covered over with a thick coating of white-ant clay mixed with water in which certain leaves and grasses have been cooked, which gives the clay a greenish colour. At the top, over the drain-hole through which the wax was poured out, a large clay-cup or *khondi* is plastered as part of this new clay covering, and the whole affair is now known as a *kaskut-chancha*. This is hardened in the sun, and then baked in a furnace with the *khondi* uppermost; the metal melts and falls through the drain-hole into the place occupied by the wax, and takes the pattern left by the wax on the clay that was plastered over it.

4. Pottery

323 There are no potters in the heart of the Abujhmar hills, partly because in the valleys of the clear rocky mountain streams there is no suitable clay, and partly because the Hill Maria still grows and uses gourds for many purposes, or else uses bamboo tubes. But all now use earthen pots at least for cooking, and for the Pot of the Departed, many also for drawing and storing water. At every market, therefore, in the valleys and plains below there are potters who do a considerable trade with the Hill Marias, and some have settled in their villages like Nugur and Lakka between the Kutru foot of the hills and the Indrawati, while, of course, potters are plentiful in the Bison-horn country. [564] The potters belong to the great Kumhar potter caste, at least in name, though here again many differ little in type from surrounding Marias. They use the common type of Indian potters' wheel, and

there is no need to describe their processes in this book. The potter, 326 like the Gharwa, expects immediate payment for his goods and is not a tribal servant remunerated with a retainer of grain at harvest like the blacksmith; but he often takes payment in grain. For a Bison-horn Maria marriage, the potter will make and supply as many pots as are required, but after the marriage is paid a bullock, cow or calf for his work.

C. *Musical Instruments*

1. Drums

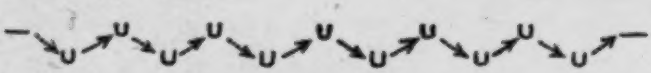
The Bison-horn Marias use the large double-membrane drums 534 called *birya-dol*, of which typical specimens are shown in the illustrations in Plates VIII and IX. The hollow cylindrical body of these drums is a section of [824] the trunk of a *bija* (*Pterocarpus marsupium*) or a *seona* (*Gmelina arborea*) tree up to sixteen or seventeen inches in diameter. The right hand membrane is made of goat-skin, even by those who have the goat as totem, and this is struck by the finger-tips of the open right hand. The other membrane is of cow- or bullock-hide, and this is struck with a bamboo stick carried in the left hand, and sometimes adorned at the end with a bunch of the pea-pod iron pellet-bells that are attached to the *tirdudi* bamboo dancing-sticks of their women. The membranes are stitched to each other by thongs of cow-hide criss-crossed over the outside of the wooden cylinder. That cylinder is sometimes as much as three feet long, and the weight is very considerable. The drum is slung over the right shoulder by a sling of hide or cord, sometimes adorned with cowries, and is carried obliquely across the stomach, the right end being the higher. There is no season among them when drum-beating is taboo or *melo* (their term for the Hill Maria *polo*). They [533] have different drum rhythms for different dances, for weddings, for success in the chase, and a dactylic beat, for the drum beaten from the roof of the house to announce death; for the *pen-harsita* dance at their festival corresponding to the Hill Maria Koqsar they use the drum-stick only, and not their right hands, the rhythm being seven short beats followed by two long beats.

These *dol* drums are occasionally found in Hill Maria villages also, but are a sign of cultural contact with the Bison-horn Marias. The essential Hill Maria drum is the single-membrane *turam* drum. The body is a wooden bowl, generally the rounded base of the hollow trunk of an exhausted *salphi* (*Caryota urens*) tree, trimmed with [824] the waist-knife to bowl-shape; sometimes a section of *bija* (*Pterocarpus marsupium*) trunk is similarly whittled into bowl-shape. The membrane is dried untanned cow-hide, hair outwards, and this is

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

534 attached by criss-cross thongs of the same material to rings of the same material tied round the outside of the bowl in its centre and just above its base. The thongs are passed through holes pierced in the overlap of the membrane with the point of the knife or of an arrow, and pulled taut without anything being done to guard the edge of the membrane from tearing. Occasionally pottery bowls [177] are used instead of ***salphi*** or ***bija*** wood, a practice learnt both from the Teluguized Gonds of the south and the northernmost Murias of Antagarh tahsil.

533 The ***turam*** drum is placed on the ground between the outspread legs of the player, who sits on his buttocks with legs bent at the knee. The drum-sticks are held lightly between the index and middle fingers, the right stick being somewhat larger than the left. [784] It is taboo to beat a ***turam*** except at Koqsar and weddings, though nowadays most of them regard the taboo as lifted for a dance at a high official's camp. The ordinary rhythm at Koqsar and weddings is :—



The rhythm thus begins and ends on a long beat with the right hand, with six short left hand and five short right hand beats alternately in between.

534 I saw once at Nugur a small drum of the ***turam*** shape made with a hollow gourd bowl.

When it is taboo to use the ***turam*** drums, boys use what are called by them ***pak-dol*** or ***veddur-dol***, literally 'bamboo-drums', which are really split-stringed instruments.[a] They are made of two-foot lengths of the thick bamboo called ***noli-veddur*** by the Marias, or ***bendri-bans*** in Halbi. The outer rind of the bamboo is prised apart from the rest of the bamboo for a length of about eighteen inches, three inches being left joined at each end. The prised rind is about one-eighth of an inch thick and an inch and a half wide. It is raised from the body of the bamboo by two small bridges (***barga***) of bamboo inserted at each end as near its junctions with the body of the bamboo as possible, and is made into three 'strings' by two longitudinal cuts. The drum is laid on the ground and rubbed firmly into position in the dust, and dust is poured along its sides ; the 'strings' are then struck with light drum-sticks in the same way as the ***turam***. The Bison-horn Marias do not make this.

Brass dish-shaped gongs (***gatta***) struck with sticks used, till a few years ago, to be an indispensable part of the bride-price or

[a] [See cat. 116, pp. 421-422,—Analyst]

2. Gongs

sponsalia at a Hill Maria wedding. They were brought to the markets by itinerant Telugu dealers, but for some 534 reason or other they have ceased to stock them, and the modern wedding takes place without them. Several remain, and are now highly prized, but are generally brought out for a camp dance, along with any old brass pot or piece of metal with which a clanging noise can be made.

3. Other instruments

A few northern Hill Marias and, occasionally, Bison-horn Marias use the brass *tori* hunting horns of the Murias, and towards the Parja country the Bison-horn Marias sometimes imitate these by a 'horn' of strips of palm-leaf wound like a bandage round and away from the end of a wooden mouth-piece, each fold being gummed on to the edge of the preceding fold to the extent of the overlap.

Some Bison-horn Marias use bamboo flutes to accompany the *dol* drums at wedding dances, but I had no chance of examining one closely. They use also little iron jews-harps (*kach-tendor*) made by the blacksmiths, but of the primitive type, with the tongue straight and welded to the bend between the two arms of the frame, and of the same length as the arms, but only a thin narrow strip of iron.[A] They say they have also a small wooden stringed instrument which they call *kikir*,[A] probably a derivative of the Indian *chikara*.

4. Bull-roarers

The only other instruments are the bells and jingling anklets already mentioned in describing the dancing-dress of Hill Maria men and the dancing-sticks of the Bison-horn Maria women, unless mention is made here of the bull-roarers, which Hill Maria boys call *ate* and make of a strip of split bamboo, pointing one end and notching it near the point for a bark string, with which, looped round one finger, they whirl the bull-roarer round counter-clockwise. It seems to be purely a toy, and to have no religious or magical significance. At various camps the lads present made them on request; none were holed at the bottom.

D. Dancing

1. Hill Maria

The description of Maria dancing given by Russell and Hiralal 535 (III, pp. 136-7) is brief and misleading; it possibly relates to Marias of the Chanda plains, though the dancers illustrated are wearing typical Hill Maria dancing-dress.[A] Russell and Hiralal do not mention the remarkable Bison-horn dancing.

It is taboo for Hill Marias to dance except on the night of Koqsar and at weddings, or at the rare visits of State officials. For practical purposes, therefore, it may be said that they dance only

[A] [See cat. 116, p. 422 — Analyst]

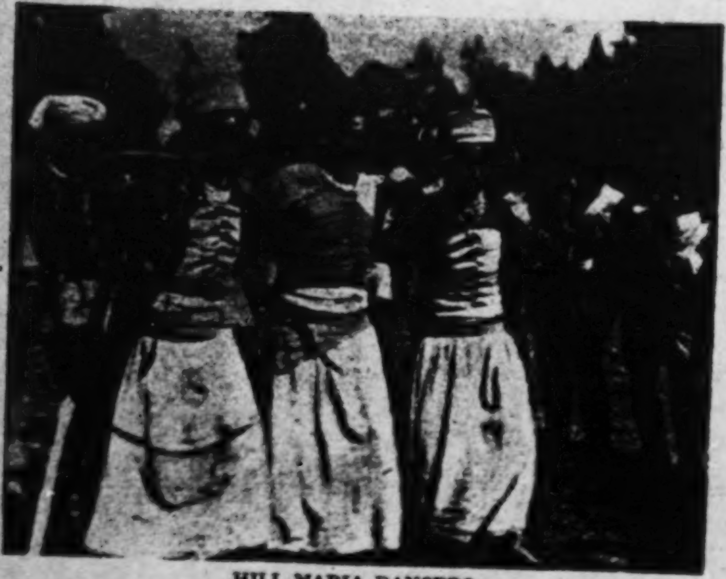
535 in the early summer, between the harvest-home and sowing. It is, therefore, not surprising that their dancing is poor and monotonous in comparison to that of the Bison-horn Marias, the Teluguized Koitor of the south, and the Parjas, Gadbas and Murias of the north. There is nothing to prevent married women joining in; they always join the Koqsar dances, and if generally the wedding dances are restricted to unmarried girls, even old women often take part in dances at official camps.

The essential feature of the Hill style of dancing is that it is
533 *pata-endanna*, dancing to song, and the singing is far more important
535 than the drumming. The theme of the song and the lines with
meaning are sung by three youths or two youths with a girl between
them, who are known as the *pata-bhita* or 'song-fellows', who walk
up and down as they sing in front of the line or ring of dancers;
they are shown clearly in the illustration opposite. All the dancers
answer each stave sung by the 'song-fellows' in full-throated
chorus, usually a meaningless refrain. The opening refrain and the
chorus refrain are sometimes soft and melancholic, almost wailing;
the refrains are melodious and lingering, far more intelligible to the
European than any Hindu music.

535 Normally the dancers form a long line, not a circle, though the line is curved and revolves in a circle, always right-handed. Sometimes the line is of men and boys only, sometimes (as in the illustration opposite) the girls are all together at the far end of the line, but more often, if not invariably after they have warmed to the dance and any initial shyness has worn off, there is a girl between every pair of men or boys. But whether the dancers on his right and left are girls or not, each dancer puts his right hand round the neck of the dancer on his right, and his left hand round the waist of the dancer on his left. The right foot is moved slowly to the right, the body being raised on the toes of both feet; the heels are raised twice and lowered without touching the ground, and then raised a third time and brought to the ground, when the left foot is brought up to the right foot and the raising and lowering of the heels are repeated with both feet together; the right foot is then moved away as at first, and the steps repeated. Each time the body is raised with the heels, the male dancers make their bunches of buttock-bells clash together by a jerk of their posteriors. So the whole line gyrates very slowly, in perfect time; but as this step is never varied, and the only change is in the songs, the dancing is monotonous to a spectator. Actually the jolliest part of the performance at camp dances is the hilarious entrance of the dancers in a rampaging column of fives or sixes, lads and girls mixed, yelling, whistling and laughing, on to the dancing ground, preceded

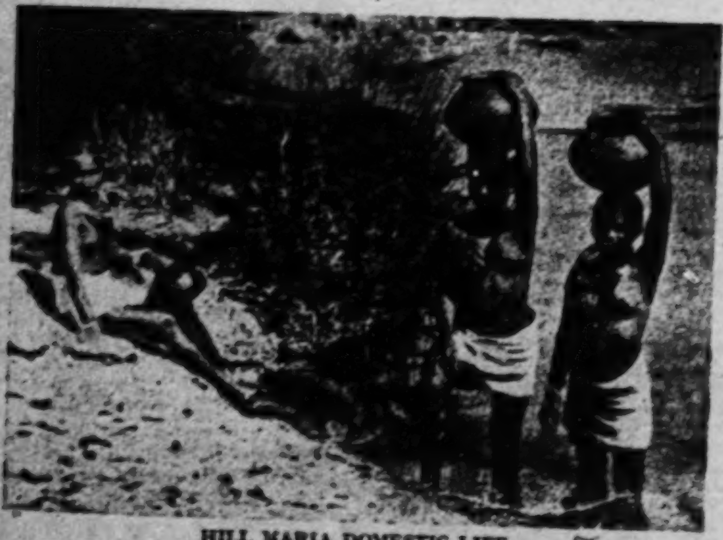
1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

PLATE XV



535
292

HILL MARIA DANCERS



482
415

HILL MARIA DOMESTIC LIFE
Fetching water from river
(Photographs by Baron E. von Eickstedt)

[Facing p. 184]

535 by a few men with kettle-drums and more with clanging brass gongs; to this babel of sound must be added the clatter of the innumerable iron neck-rings and the bracelets of the girls, and the clangour of the great bunches of bells on the buttocks of the male dancers. The whole scene is lit up by blazing torches and log fires.

535 831 Often a slight element of obscenity is introduced by one or two men dressed as tiger-men with large imitation *membra virilia* which they brandish at each other and at the women, girls and youths, rushing ludicrously here, there, and everywhere, and provoking such laughter that often the dancers have to break off their singing to join in.

535 868 There is no formal dancing teaching. Boys are allowed to join in the dances when they are about six, and girls when nine or ten. They learn simply by imitating their elders.

2. Bison-horn Maria

535 574 Men of all ages, married and unmarried, youths, boys, young wives and girls join in the Bison-horn Maria dances. There appears to be no time of year at which they are forbidden to dance, though naturally the spring and the summer, when they are freest from field-work, see most of their dancing. If at this time of year you invite villagers to dance at your camp, the throb of the drums attracts more and more men and girls from surrounding villages; for the tradition is that no invitation is needed, and that open house should be kept at a wedding or any other occasion when there will be dancing.

535 292 There is no mixing of men and girls as in the Abujhmar hills. The girls, in their ordinary finery of beads and iron and brass neck-rings, and wearing their head snoods and fillets of polished brass, have no special dancing apparatus except the *tirdudi* dancing-sticks ornamented with iron bells which they hold upright in their right hands, clashing the bells in unison by striking the ground with the butts of the sticks on their left front as they bring their left foot across in front of their right; each girl rests her left arm on the back of the left shoulder of the girl on her left. They gyrate to the right, like the Hill Marias, but the Bison-horn women have a far more rapid step; the right foot is moved to the right and slightly to the rear, and the left foot is then brought across the right leg to the right front, while the ground is struck with the butts of the jingling dancing-sticks. The girls in this way dance fast around the outside of the dancing men, sometimes singing as they go; but the unceasing throb of the men's great drums drowns their song.

535 The women's step never varies, whatever the dance; but the men have many different dances and steps, and can improvise a dance on practically any theme, such as asking for pork or *landa*. Their *pen-karsita* or Koqsar dance is a very fast, side-stepping

535 dance, which makes everyone laugh, while all the mediums of neighbouring villages attend, and, possessed by their godlings, leap wildly to and fro, carrying bunches of *saja* leaves in their hands or holding them over their matted hair, to the general merriment. The chief wedding dance is the bison dance, every male turning at intervals in his paces to smile and 'glad-eye' the next dancer, and each then pretending to butt the other with his bison-horns; in another figure they similarly mimic two cocks fighting. The greatest sign of skill is to be able to impale on the tip of the horns a piece of grass twisted into a ring and thrown on the ground; the dancer may before this pretend to be a young and frisky bull, butting at wisps of grass or trees, or hurling them into the air to toss them on his horns. I have seen a dancer pick a small finger ring off the ground on the tip of his horns. As among the Hill
535 Marias, and indeed most Central Provinces Gonds, there is always
831 a comic and obscene element; men wearing black gourd masks with thick hair and beards of black bear or goat fur, and carrying clubs, nets and dummy guns, rush in and out amongst the dancers, making obscenely suggestive gestures with their clubs at the dancing or onlooking girls, and provoking roars of laughter.

[273] There is generally a pause for *landa* or *mahua* spirit sooner or later, after which the girls sometimes, before resuming the dance, sit in a bunch swaying from their hips and singing short catchy refrains, with either frankly sexual meaning or no meaning at all; and often the lads opposite make the whole company laugh by imitating them in falsetto.

The dancing and singing, it need hardly be said, lead on frequently to love-making, couples retiring into the darkness, or else starting an affair ending in experimental union and perhaps, later, in matrimony.

E. *Other Amusements*

524 The Bison-horn Marias' favourite pastime of cock-fighting has already been described (see page 162 above). Small wooden toys are made for the children, very crude representations of tigers or other animals; and a pathetic sight at the graves of children are
[764] these toys left there for the *hanal*[1] of the children to play with. I have never found any Marias making string figures; and they have
526 shown no interest in attempts to demonstrate them. The Murias and Bhattras have innumerable games in which all the village youth takes part in the cold weather and spring nights, many of which

---

[1] Literally the 'Gone', used of the spirits of the dead.

involve considerable physical exertion and have proved excellent 526
material for the physical training of the boys in the State schools;
at the Muria *gotul* dormitories these games often take the place of
dancing and singing. But the only Hill Maria villages which have
anything of the kind appear to be those of the Padalibhum and
Tapalibhum *parganas* which are gradually adopting the dormitory
organization of their Muria neighbours; and some Bison-horn
villages on the borders of the Jagdalpur Muria country are beginning
to copy the Murias and Bhattras. Early to bed is the rule for old [868]
and young in Maria villages, and the child from the beginning learns
to copy his father's activities; his playthings soon become small
bows and arrows, fishing-rods and snares, skill in the use of which
will make him an asset to the community. Stilt-walking in the 883
early monsoon, occasional use of bull-roarers and bamboo drums,
crude ornamentation of the walls of houses or the carving of ornamental
combs and beadwork seem to be the only other recreations
of Hill Maria youth.

F. *Reckoning Time*

The Hill Maria names for the months have already been given 805
(page 129), and it has been said that in general the Bison-horn
Marias know and use the local Hindu names. They call a month
lonj, the word used for the moon; but all, even Bison-horn Marias,
have to think hard before they can tell you what month it is, and
there may be a certain amount of argument on the point. Throughout
Bastar there is something of this uncertainty; the local Hindu
months are named after festivals such as Goncha, Dasehra and
Diwali; and the Bastaria, even if he adopts these, does not like
to observe them on the same date in every village, because that
would deprive him of the chance of taking part in the celebrations at
the surrounding villages.

Though the Bison-horn Maria knows the Hindu names for the days of the week, and uses them in his conversation, the Hill Maria does not. If word comes to a Hill Maria headman that in thirteen days' time he and his villagers have to go to the tahsil court, or to work on the annual road repairs, he will make a tally string with thirteen knots and undo one every day, leaving to keep the appointment on the morning of the last knot. These tally strings are also kept by those who attend markets at fairly regular intervals; and in a murder case, of which the villagers had decided to suppress or postpone informing the police because it was the harvest season, the wife of the murdered man, determined to get justice, had kept a tally string on which she tied a fresh knot every

805 morning after the murder, ultimately going to the police when there were fifty-four knots on it.

The Maria names for the times of day belong to this sub-chapter, but as they follow so closely the daily routine, I give them in the next sub-chapter.

G. *Daily Routine*

512
805 The following list of times of day was taken from Bison-horn Marias. It is more comprehensive than the Hill Maria nomenclature but the latter understand or have similar expressions in their own dialect for the Gondi expressions used by the Bison-horn Marias, though phrases dealing with ploughing or buffaloes, and Halbi expressions, unless corruptions of Gondi expressions, are not current in the hills. In the list, Ha. stands for Halbi, Hi. for Hindi and G. for Gondi.

Hāchakusānā (G.)	2 or 3 a.m., the time when the *hāch-pitte* or king-crow calls '*Thākur-jī, thākur-jī !*' in the forest.
Kōrrk-kusānā (G.) *Kukra-bastan* (Ha.)	Cock-crow.
Pal-tūer-tintā (G.) *Hal-jorto-berā* (Ha.)	5 a.m., time to put the yoke or *hal* on the oxen.
Pharphar-berā (Ha.)	When the darkness is fleeing; *pharphar* is Gondi, the Nagpur Gonds saying *phalphal-ātā* for this time.
Narkōm (G.)	Just before sunrise.
Tirtir-pōrrd (G.) *Tirtir-berā* (Ha.)	The time when the sun is rising 'tir-tir' above the horizon.
Eh-pōrrd (G.) *Pānhāri-berā* (Ha.)	7 a.m., when the women go to fetch water (*eh*).
Hāt-pōrrd (G.) *Hāto-berā* (Ha.)	9 to 10 a.m., time to go to the market (*hāt*); sometimes they say '*hāt-pej-berā*', the time to have *pej* gruel before leaving for the market.
Jāvā-pōrrd (G.) *Pej-berā* (Ha.)	About 10.30 a.m., the time for the morning meal of gruel (*jāvā* or *pej*).
Tallā-pōrrd (G.) *Mund-berā* (Ha.) or *Ād-pōrrd* (G.)	12 noon, when the sun is directly over the head (*tallā* or *mund*), or when the day is half (*ād*, corruption of the Hindi *ādhā*) over.
Arhāhī-berā (Ha.)	2.30 p.m.; literally '2½-time'; though Halbas do not know the clock, yet they use the expression, and so do nearly all Bison-horn Marias.
Hirrī-pōrrd (G.) *Kaikī-berā* (Ha.)	About 4 p.m., when flocks of green parrots (*hirrī*, *kaikī*) invade the fields, and the women return from the fields.
Rafraf-berā (Ha.) or *Rātohandiā-berā* (Ha.)	When the sun is half below the horizon. '*Rafraf*' is probably Gondi. Sunset in Maria is '*pōrrd digmūtā*'.
Kōndāng-tōhtānā (G.) *Gai-goru-berā* (Ha.)	Time for tying up cattle.
Mas-mas (G.) *Masmas-berā* (Ha.)	When the light is fast going.
Jhul-pul-berā (Ha.) *Phul-sundri* (Hi.)	About 7.30 p.m., when the flowers all shed their greatest fragrance.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

Bhainsā-andhyār (Ha.)	' Buffalo-darkness ', when the evening has become as dark as a buffalo's hide.
Tindī-tindānā (G.)	9.30 p.m., the time of eating (*tindānā*) the supper of boiled rice (*bhāt*).
Bhāt-berā (Ha.)	
Bhāt-nīnd-berā (Ha.) ..	The time when drowsiness (*nīnd*) comes over one after supper.
Narjāl (G.) ..	Midnight. The Hill Marias say *narjūm*.

512
805

The routine of the Bison-horn family's day is roughly as follows. The woman rises at cock-crow, and arranges her hair, but does not wash. She then pounds grain with the *uspal* husker. Her husband gets up when it is time to yoke the bullocks, and goes off to plough. She then sweeps out the house and its surroundings, and goes to the river to fetch water, and on her return cooks the *pej* gruel for her husband's meal; any spare time is occupied in basket-making. He generally comes home for this meal, but when the field-work is heavy, she takes it to him there. If they have had their meal in the house (the women always eat after their men have been satisfied), they return together to the field, where the wife works as hard as the husband, often even ploughing. She stays in the field till 'parrot-time' and then goes back to the house to prepare the evening meal, bathing naked on her way in a river pool. Her husband comes back at dusk, and ties up the cattle in the *bari* or in the byre; the children bring them home, calling stray animals with a kind of shrill yodelling. He then bathes naked in the men's pool, and returns for his supper and sleep.

I have not attempted to recapitulate the daily routine of the Hill Maria, most of which, including his four meals, has been detailed in the preceding pages, which have generally dealt primarily with him rather than the Bison-horn Maria.

H. Fire-Making

All Marias and most Murias make fire by means of a fire-saw.[a] 372 A piece of bamboo about 1¼ or 1½ inches in diameter and about 16 inches long is split down the centre for about half its length, and wedged open with a pebble or a bit of stick at the split end. This 'hearth' stick is called by Hill Marias a *negho*, and is explained by them as the 'mother' of the fire. Another length of bamboo, perhaps a little longer than the 'hearth', is split in half, and one half is trimmed along the top of the split to a clean, sharp edge; this trimmed half they call the *kansa*. A flat boulder is selected and firmly planted on the ground. On top of this are placed dry leaves, or a bit of old rag, if available; and two men hold the 'hearth' down by its ends on the stone and the leaves, so that the leaves are under the V formed by the wedged split. The third man then saws

[a] [see cat. 116, p. 423. — Analyst]

372 his *handa* by the sharp edge between their hands across the split in the ' hearth ' and at right angles to the ' hearth ', rapidly increasing the speed of his sawing; this friction soon engenders smoke and a spark, which falls through the ' hearth ' on to the little heap of inflammable bamboo sawdust that has fallen with the sawing on to the dead leaves or rag. Sawing is at once stopped, and the ' hearth ' lifted off the sawdust with great care by the kneeling men, who gently blow on the spark till it spreads and kindles the sawdust, when they fold the leaves carefully over sawdust and sparks and take the packet off to the place where a fire is to be lit, kindling first heaps of dry grass, and with this small sticks and finally logs. They are very quick in the process. I introduced a race in the tribal sports at the Maharani Sahiba's Dasehra celebrations, in which teams of three had to run fifty yards, make fire, and run with it another fifty yards to kindle a bonfire; and Hill Maria teams invariably won; the timing of the whole process, from the start till the bonfire was well alight, was eighty-seven seconds. In the
[177] Muria and some Bison-horn Maria tracts the use of matches is coming in.

There appears to be no ritual occasion on which fire has to be kindled in this way. The first pile of dry wood at the firing of the *penda* fields, and the fires for cooking sacrificial meals, are kindled
[769] from a burning log brought from the Hearth of the Departed in the *kasyeq-gaita*'s or *perma*'s house.

000

PART IV

Religion and Magic

[p. 191]
[p. 192 is blank]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

CHAPTER X

THE EARTH, THE CLAN-GOD AND THE VILLAGE MOTHER

General: previous writers

771 IN the scanty literature dealing with Bastar, few things have received briefer attention than the religion of the Marias. Russell and Hiralal try in twenty-one pages (III, 97-118) to summarize the religion, magico-religious ideas and festivals of all the Gonds of the Central Provinces; their account, therefore, necessarily must be vague about the Marias, and on Bastar generally is in many respects misinformed; there is a tendency to prefer the picturesque to the unvarnished facts, as in the accounts of the alleged human sacrifices at Dantewara and of *Doctor Deo*. I have already stated that there has never been the slightest proof that the former ever took place, and pointed out that, if they did, they were semi-State Hindu ceremonies under the aegis of the Raja and the hereditary Rajput high-priest of his tutelary goddess Danteshwari. *Doctor Deo* is represented as a principal god of 'north Bastar'; actually the Mohammedan sub-assistant surgeon 'deified' as *Doctor Deo* died of cholera on the Keskal pass as he was returning to Raipur from Bastar, and his spirit has been attached by the surrounding Murias as a peon or servant to the shrine of Bhangaram at the head of the pass, where from generations past the final scene of disease-riddance or *bohorani* ceremonies among the Bhattras and Murias of Jagdalpur and Kondagaon tahsils and the adjacent Bastar Irredenta tracts of Jeypore had taken place; here the scapegoat from Jagdalpur is at last driven forth into the wilderness, and hundreds of litters or model *rath* chariots have been deposited in front of Bhangaram with scape-doves and the sweepings of houses visited by epidemics. *Doctor Deo's* cult is a later and very minor accretion of this ancient cult.

776 618 Glasfurd in his Report correctly noted that, like the Jhoria and other surrounding Murias, the Marias of the Abujhmar hills had in several villages Log-gods which they called *pen* (plural, *penk*); but he did not realize that there was one of these *penk* for each clan. This was pointed out on page 42 of the *Gazetteer*, though the clans are spoken of there as 'tribes' or by the Hindu term *gotra*; the suggestion there made that the system of each clan in its own area worshipping its own *pen* was even then breaking down, was at least premature, considering that it is still in full force in the Antagarh

parts of the Abujhmar hills, if, as will be seen, it is weaker on the Kutru side and has been modified among the Bison-horn Marias.

Even among the Gonds of the British districts of the Central Provinces bordering on the Nagpur District, the special godlings such as Pharsi Pen, Matiya, Ghangra, Chawar and Palo (see Russell and Hiralal, III, p. 99) seem to be only incidental and later additions to their religion.

Gond religion outside Bastar; the Chuddur Penk

There the clans are divided into groups or phratries according to the number of Little Gods or Chuddur Penk kept as domestic godlings in a pot inside the house of the head of the family; and for each clan there is, or was, somewhere in the Province, a Holy Circle or *Pen-kara* beneath a sacred *saja* tree, in the fork of which would be tied a grass bundle containing for the whole clan a set of godlings of the same number as the Chuddur Penk in the houses of members of the clan; this set is in reality the Big-God or Bhera Pen (a name commonly Hinduized as Bura Deo or even Mahadeo) of the clan. Just as the Chuddur Penk pot in the house not infrequently contains, besides the actual Chuddur Penk, a vermillioned shell or pebble or knot of wood representing the 'Chuddur (small) Mahadeo' or Narayan Deo or some other godling from whom the family may believe itself to have received some past help, so too the grass bundle at the Holy Circle may contain representations of Bara (big) Mahadeo, Narayan Deo, Pharsi Pen, Matiya, Ghangra, Palo, etc. But it is hopeless to expect the householder or the *Pen-gadwa* custodian of the Holy Circle to name each of the Chuddur Penk or their Bhera Pen counterparts; they have no individual names, but collectively are the clan-god. Apart from these Chuddur Penk *penates*, many houses in British districts have, in a recess in the wall or in the corner of the room, corresponding to the corner of the *lonu* where the Maria keeps the Pot of the Departed, a row of little plaster mounds representing the souls of the Departed, unless these have been taken to the *Pen-gadwa* priest at the Holy Circle and there re-united by him in the *gadwa* marriage ceremony to the clan.

The Chuddur Penk not known in Bastar

Lucie-Smith and others record of the Marias of the Chanda District that they also have these Chuddur Penk, with phratries or groups of clans differentiated according to the number of the Penk. When, finding definitely no trace of them among the Hill or Bison-horn Marias of Bastar, I suggested to Dr. Wood, the present Bishop of Nagpur, who worked as a missionary for years in Chanda, that the information about the Chanda Marias was wrong, he very kindly had further enquiries made by the Rev. S. G. Patwardhan, an Indian Christian missionary with an intimate knowledge of

Chanda Gonds, who reported definitely that in the Chanda Maria villages of Bidri, Yemla, Burgi, Uddera and Kandodi the Marias had one three-god, six four-god, eight five-god, eight six-god and eight seven-god clans. The difficulty is, of course, that the word 'Maria', as we have seen, is not a Gondi word and may cover more than one ethnic group, as in Bastar; there certainly are differences between the plains and Hill Marias of Chanda, and the point needs to be cleared by verification in definite hill villages in the Chanda portion of the Abujhmar hills. My enquiries from some of these villagers who visited my camps in Bastar along with Bastar relatives never produced any Chanda Maria who admitted belonging to a god-group or having Chuddur Penk in his house. Admittedly even in Nagpur District, Gonds are reluctant to show their Chuddur Penk, and Koitor everywhere have to be handled delicately before they will talk of the other domestic cult, that of the Departed. Nevertheless, I have known many Marias intimately, and have had them talking freely on these questions; and I have seen the contents of every pot, gourd, packet or other receptacle in many a Hill and Bison-horn Maria house: but I never found any domestic godling, and they have always denied having them, or god-groups founded on them. So likewise did adjacent Jhoria and Gotal Murias, though some of them knew of Gonds who had immigrated into Bastar from the Central Provinces with domestic godlings and god-groups. The only Bastar Gonds of whom it has ever been reported that they have domestic gods in addition to the clan-god are the 'Telugu Gonds' towards Konta (by which is probably meant the Dorla), stated on page 42 of the *Gazetteer* to have for each family a separate god represented by a few pieces of *tendu* (*Diospyros melanoxylon*) wood; but the Dorla villages that I visited near Jaggergonda had no such family gods. 776 618

It may, therefore, be taken as certain that neither Hill nor Bison-horn Marias of Bastar have the cult of the Chuddur Penk, and that their clan-groups are not founded on them. If they are to be fitted into the traditional scheme of god-groups by persons who dislike exceptions to a rule apparently so universal among other Gonds, they must come in as the missing one-god group!

Much has been said in the preceding chapters, particularly the chapter on agriculture, on the cults of Bhum (the earth), the Clan-god and the Village Mother. In some sense, all three are the same, all Marias, Hill and Bison-horn, being the children of Bhum. They will tell you sometimes that the Pen clan-god and the Village Mother are also Bhum; and in some places the cairn or table-stone below the sacred *saja* tree does duty 771

General nature of Bastar Maria cult of Earth, Clan-god and Village Mother

771 on one occasion for the Pen and on another for the Village Mother; even at the annual village festival of the Mother following the clan harvest-home and Koqsar of the Hill Marias the Pen, if honoured, is sometimes honoured on the same stones as the Mother, and not at a separate cairn. It is useless to expect to get any clear-cut distinction between the three conceptions out of a Maria, whose religious ideas are vague and inchoate. He knows only that there are factors which may bring trouble or which may benefit, and that the wise clan and village duly propitiate them, though, if in their turn these unknown factors fail to reciprocate, they will get no further meed of sacrifice for the same immediate object unless the desired benefit is at once granted. An example of this attitude has already been given in the mention in Chapter VII of the deputation that went to see the Gume clan's god to protest against rain preventing the firing of the *penda*, and to promise him a cock if and when he stopped the rain. In the actual formulae pronounced by the village *kasyeq-gaita* in the hills and the *perma* in the Bison-horn country at the sowing and other ceremonies, however, I have never heard the clan-god's name mentioned; they start almost invariably with '*Bhum kenji, Talugh kenji!*' 'Earth hearken, Mother hearken!', sometimes addressing similarly '*Nel*' or fields and '*Jimme Jaga*', all that is around. Here *Bhum* and the clan-god appear to be identical; in the villages where there are both a *kasyeq-gaita* and a *bhum-gaita* in the Abujhmar country, it is the latter who has to preside over the village deputations to the clan-god. The distinction, however, is not clear-cut. In most hill villages there is no separate *bhum-gaita*, and the *kasyeq-gaita* not only performs his work, but is sometimes called *bhum-gaita* or *bhumia*, while in Bison-horn villages the *perma* is *bhum-gaita* and addresses himself in some tracts to the Earth both as Bhu-deo and Bhu-devi, earth-god and earth-goddess, besides being the priest of the Village Mother and the other forms which the earth takes in Bison-horn cults, such
791 as Dongar Deo or Kodo Deo. The *waddai* or *modul-waddai* I have referred to as the clan-priest, and it has been seen how in the Hill Maria clan-areas each village goes to him for the celebration of the clan festival and for obtaining the clan-god's permission to hold the village festival. But the clan-priest is generally not the clan headman even in the Abujhmar hills tracts where the clan-area has become the modern *pargana*. He may or may not be a person of ability and influence. He should be the medium, into whose body the clan-god enters and through whose mouth the god makes his
622 will known to his clan. The secular *pargana* headman is a man of
791 far more influence; and in the villages the *kasyeq-gaita* and the *perma* are religious headmen in a way that the clan-priest seldom is

in the clan; often the same man is both religious headman and 622 secular headman (*gaita*, *peda*), and these functions were probably 791 always combined before the growing interference of the State with village life and the excessive demands for forced labour and supplies began to make the secular headmanship a burden to be avoided by the true leader of the village and put on to the village simpleton.

The Village Mother is always dealt with in Hill and Bison-horn 776 villages through the *kasyeq-gaita* and the *perma* respectively; but she neither enters into the body of a medium nor can be consulted 791 through one like the clan-god. Though it be through her that the 771 *kasyeq-gaita's* eggs are addled or other omens of ill or indications that the village should shift are sent, yet to make plain her will the 618 medium of the clan-god, that is the clan-priest (the *waddai* or *modul-waddai*), is sent for, and through his mouth the clan-god expounds the will of the Unseen Powers. It is tempting to regard her as the personification of the female and the clan-god as that of the male element in the reproductive powers of the Earth or Bhum; needless to say, there are no Maria theologians to worry themselves over such distinctions, and it is not a clear-cut one, since some clans have a clan-goddess, not a god; e.g. Oghal Muttai, goddess of the Dhurwa clan, and Gumtuli, goddess of the Padali clan of Padalibhum at Adnar. This conception, nevertheless, does to a considerable extent clarify the fundamental relation between the Earth, the clan-god and the Village Mother. The other point to be remembered is that the clan-god is the Earth in its dealings with the clan, and the Mother the Earth in its dealings with the village. No woman or girl may take part in the festivals, public sacrificial meals, worship and intercession of either clan-god or Village Mother.

The Earth, then, as clan-god, is the god of nourishment and 776 reproduction, and of life itself; the Marias are his children, fed by him. For them to raise their sustenance he divided up the land 618 among the clans, and the clan-area among the villages, and in each clan and village he appointed priests or headmen who alone might communicate with him, and to whose first ancestor he revealed the clan and village boundaries, which knowledge has been handed down from father to son. The Maria leaves his *penda* slope for another after two or three years because the god is suffering from having too much nourishment extracted from that slope, but he will return to it when the god has recovered from his exhaustion. Children are but one of the god's crops.

The Clan-god

In form, we have seen, the clan-god of Marias of both kinds 778 and of Murias, is a framework of three parallel *saja* logs held together by cross-pieces of bamboo or *saja*, to which they are lashed by cords of *siari* creeper or twisted

178 thongs of the outer rind of bamboos. Where *saja* trees are scarce,
he may be made entirely of bamboos, but will be lodged in a hut
under a *saja* tree. The junctions of the logs and the cross-pieces
are adorned with bunches of peacock and jungle-cock feathers,
and the ends of the logs with rupees or spirals of peacock quill or
bands of brass and silver. At the first-fruits ceremonies his shed
[182] is adorned with plaited fringes of the stalks and ears of the new
grains, or bunches of bean and pulse pods; and he is brought forth
to have the blood of the sacrificed victims sprinkled upon him.

Halbas, Telangas and Murias have precisely similar gods, if the logs composing them are more elaborately adorned and sometimes carved. Their generic name in Bastar is Anga Deo or Pat Deo, 'Log-God'. The central log is the essential part, for the other two logs are added primarily to enable the god to be borne on the shoulders of four men when he goes forth to a festival or a witch hunt. The Jhoria log-god at Narainpur had a special nose for witches, and the late Raja Bhairam Deo, great-grandfather of the present Maharaja, installed a copy of it in the palace at Jagdalpur; for witch hunts the god used to be brought in from Narainpur while the palace copy was sent to Narainpur during his absence. I found that the palace copy was in 1927 being used generally without reference to the Narainpur prototype for detecting witchcraft around Jagdalpur, a fee of Rs. 5 being paid into the State Treasury to the credit of the Temple Court of Wards whenever surrounding Murias requisitioned its services.

As has been observed on page 51, there is a tradition among
173 the Hill Marias (of Chhota Dongar, Mangnar and Barsur Mar
parganas) that the great log-god Pat Raja of the Jate clan of
618 Mohnar in Mangnar *pargana* with the help of his wife's brother,
Use Modia, the log-god of the Lekami clan of the Bison-horn
village of Ghotpal, near Barsur, divided up both Hill and Bison-horn
Marias into clans, in the old days when there was regular intermarriage
between the Hill and Bison-horn Marias. The legend
does not appear to be known to the latter, who have only vague
traditions of having at some remote date descended to their present
lands from the Abujhmar hills, where occasionally they say that
their clan-god still resides.

It is certain that most of the Hill Maria clan-gods have relation-
176 ship claimed for them with Pat Raja of Mohnar. The Usendi clan
618 of Orcha has his younger brother Wikir Hunga at Japgunda, the
Deda clan of Kurmer have another younger brother, Nule Harma,
the Dhurwa clan of Gomagal have his sister Oghal Mutta'i, the
Hill Maria Marvi clan of Toqtoli in Mangnar *pargana* have his
sister's son Mara-Magh, while the Gume clan of the Barsur Mar

pargana not only acquired a yet younger brother of Pat Raja, Verma 776 Mo'itto Pen, as their clan-god, but also a family of Pat Raja's clan, 618 the Jaterom,[1] as hereditary clan-priests because, the Jaterom being *akomama*[2] (wife-clan) to the Gumelor, the new god was related to them as *mama* or maternal uncle and had to have a priest or *waddai* of his own clan or one *dadabhai*[2] (brother-clan) to it. They say in fact that all clan-gods are mutually related, if they are sometimes very hazy as to the actual relationship; and they add that the gods, being Koitor, must have a full set of brother-clans and wife-clans like any other Koitor. Memories are, however, so poor that [153] it is often difficult to ascertain the name of a man's dead father and quite impossible to ascertain the name of his grandfather and the clan and village of his grandmother, if, indeed, even of his mother; and it would be altogether out of the question to disentangle the descents and relationships of the clans by deduction from the traditional kinship of the clan-gods to Pat Raja and each other.

That old clans split up into new clans is clear, especially among the Hill Marias, from the fact that several of the larger clans have attached to them smaller clans which have no separate clan-god of their own, but attend the celebrations of the god of the large and presumably parent clan; certain other clans, though they have new clan-gods of their own, acknowledge their origin from another clan by taking the permission of the god of that clan before holding their own clan festivals. The way in which these clans split up is a matter belonging rather to the chapter in Part V, where the clan and phratry organization is dealt with as a matter of social organization, than to this chapter on religion. Here the point is that new clans are breaking off, and that their separation from the parent clan is signalized by the birth of a son or daughter (a son in the cases that I have seen) to the god of the parent clan. Thus Tumirgunda, in the plains between Handawada, still a true Hill Maria village, and the river Indrawati, near Barsur, belongs to the Tamo clan, and is the seat of their god Hurra Gunda Mo'itto[3] Pen. The *modul-waddai* of this clan-god was in 1930 still the *modul-waddai* of neighbouring villages of the Atami clan; and of the Tamo and Atami villages in his 'see' some were, like Tumirgunda itself, still mainly Hill Maria in culture, dancing in Hill Maria style, and some had changed to Bison-horn culture and dancing, and were recognized as Bison-horn

---

[1] Jāterom is the plural of Jāte; the clan is distinct from the Jātā, plural Jātālūr, and the Jāti clan of Jātwara *pargana*.

[2] Clans are *akomama* to clans with which they may intermarry, but *dadabhai* to all others.

[3] '*Mo'itto*' ('old man') or '*mutta'i*' ('old woman') is always added to the clan-god's name.

776 618 villages by the headman of the Bison-horn Pharaspal *pargana*. The god had long ago produced a son worshipped as clan-god in the Atami village of Chudala Karka, now a Bison-horn village. But the son's dependence on the parent was shown by the practice of the Tumirgunda clan-priest every third year making a new network of peacock's quills for encasing the front cross-piece of the Chudala Karka son. The *modul-waddai* shaves his beard only when he has to start to make a new quill network, and lets it grow after that till it has again to be replaced three years later. Chudala Karka pays Tumirgunda for this network a pig, a *khandi* of 164 lb. of husked rice and a pot of *mahua* spirit. In the *pen-rawar* hut of the god at Tumirgunda was yet another son, already named Hunga Gunda Mo'itto Pen, who was being made for another Atami village in the 'see', and was to be taken to it as soon as he was a year old; he then consisted only of one bamboo pole tipped with a silver cone and adorned with bunches of peacock feathers. Here perhaps the need for separation was arising because the Atami villages were adopting or had adopted Bison-horn ways, while the village for which the new god was being 'born' was some way from Chudala Karka, and effectively separated from it by the Indrawati river. So at Kurmer at the end of 1929 Nule Harma, god of the Deda clan, was producing a 'son' for some distant villages of the clan; and we have already seen how the Gume clan of the Barsur Mar *pargana* acquired from the Jaterom of Mohnar not only a younger brother of their god, but a Jate family to be his clan-priest.

The *Gazetteer* has been quoted as suggesting that the system of separate areas and separate gods for each clan was breaking down. Among the Hill Marias the remark is justified to the following extent only. Many of the old villages of the Bhairamgarh Mar and Kutru Mar *parganas* of the Kutru zamindari have disappeared, including indeed the two which Glasfurd gave as the seats of the chief Hill Maria clan-gods of his time. Many clans have disappeared or are reduced to one or two households. There are various causes; maladministration leading to exodus to the tahsils of the plains or the Chanda district, the great 1918 influenza epidemic, and the ravages of yaws. The total disappearance of clans is evidenced by [764] the presence in villages now settled by other clans of *kotokal* rows of menhirs erected for the Departed of forgotten clans, quite distinct from those erected by the present clan, which can give no information at all about its predecessors. Clans greatly diminished in numbers soon find that they cannot economically manage to keep even one village going on their traditional clan-area, much less keep effective control and user of all the alternative *penda* slopes of the area. The dregs, therefore, of three or four clans may settle

618
776

together in a village in the area of the largest dreg, and abandon claim to the other clan-areas; for example, Aipur in Kutru Mar had in 1931, one Hoyami, one Telam, one Micha and two Bardi clan houses, while Malahanar had four Hoyami, two Pungati and one Diwa. Both were originally Hoyami clan villages; the clan has also still the villages of Komu and Kalhaza in Bhairamgarh Mar, but has since the census deserted Malahanar, as the headman and all but one Hoyami householder died suddenly, and the remaining Hoyami shifted to Kalhaza. In adjacent parts of the Chhota Dongar Mar *pargana* there are big clans like the Usendi and the Jugho already needing fresh lands, and the obvious fields for expansion are the empty lands of dwindling or extinct clans in Kutru Mar and Bhairamgarh Mar. Often big clans have just thrown off parties of squatters who have founded fresh villages in such places; the large Gume clan of Barsur Mar has, for example, long occupied Dunga, Goti and Kunjewada in Bhairamgarh Mar. Where there is still a remnant of a clan strong enough to raise some opposition to squatters from other clans coming in to their areas, but not to retain effective cultivating occupation, the *kasyeq-gaita* of the chief village (the clan being always too small to have retained an area big enough to become a *pargana*, and seldom having even a clan-god in its days of adversity) has sold some of the clan land for a few rupees to another clan; thus comparatively recently the Ark clan, now of Korowaya village only, sold the lands of their deserted village of Itulnar for Rs. 30 to the overflowing Jugho clan of the adjacent Chhota Dongar Mar village of Adeq and other large villages. When the sale took place, the *kasyeq-gaita* of the Arkalur showed the *kasyeq-gaita* of the Jughalor the traditional village sites, and the cairns marking former shrines of the Village Mother, and extracted a sworn promise of reverence for her. The Arkalur themselves could not have long been in occupation, as they said that the *kotokal* menhirs at Itulnar had not been erected by them but by some other forgotten clan which had died out before their occupation of the village. [425]

Not only have hardly any of these dying clans clan-gods and clan-priests, but also the colonizers, having left their hereditary clan-area, consider themselves outside their clan-god's jurisdiction, and 'under no need' therefore to attend his Koqsar or to get his permission to hold festivals before the Village Mothers of their new villages. So the Gumelor of Dunga, Goti and Kunjewada are seen no more at the Gume Koqsar of Verma Mo'itto Pen at To'inar in Barsur Mar, and the Jughalor settlers of Itulnar do not join their fellow Jughalor of Adeq and other villages of Chhota Dongar Mar at the Koqsar of the Usendi and allied clans' god Wikir Hunga at

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

618 Orcha. Ultimately the new colonies may spread, and they may
feel the need of clan-gods and petition the clan-priests of the areas
776 from which they migrated to give them a son of the old clan-god;
but meanwhile the majority of them get on quite well without him
and his clan-gatherings, and find the Village Mother and village
ceremonies quite enough for their needs. If in time they ask for
a clan-god of their own, they are likely to get some additional name
to distinguish them from the main section of their clan, and
ultimately all mention of the original clan name will be omitted.

Special features of the Clan-god among the Bison-horn Marias

It was remarked on page 194 that for each clan of the Gonds of the British India districts bordering on Nagpur there is or was a *Pen-kara* or Holy Circle under a *saja* tree somewhere in the province. If he has not become detribalized, every Gond should visit this once a year with offerings, or at least should pay sacrificial fines there on the birth of a child, on being released from handcuffs, on readmission to the community after some social lapse, and so on; and there ultimately his soul should be brought after death, to be united to the clan Departed. The villages are there no longer the *bhum* of particular clans, and many clans and god-groups may be represented in one village. Members of the clans are scattered far and wide over the province, and in one Nagpur Gond village you may find representatives of clans with the *Pen-kara* of their gods at places so far apart as Berar, Chhindwara, Lanji or Chanda. Many have settled far from their *Pen-kara* for so many generations that the fatigue of the long journey has been avoided more and more by each new generation till in the end it has been given up, and many of the present time cannot even say where it is.

To this kind of attitude some of the Bison-horn Marias are
776 beginning to come. There are many clan-areas[1] in Bijapur and
618 Dantewara tahsils and in Kutru zamindari on both sides of the
river Indrawati which, as indicated in the ethnic map on page 40,
615 are peopled by clans once purely Hill Maria in language and culture,
but now modified in both by contact either with Bison-horn Maria

---

[1] Examples are Chikatraj Pen of Kutru, the god of the Gota clan of Kutru, Borje, Bhirabhatti, Pillur, Sappimarka, Kakler, Gattapalli, Mendri, Udra villages; Kuwo-Gundo Pen, god of the Majje and Wadde clans of Bodametta, Kodepalli, Majje-Mendri, Kungler, Madhepar, Dudepalli, and Rengawaya in Kutru zamindari and of Kounde (where the god is kept and the clan-priest lives) and other villages in Chanda District; Wachami Mo'itto Pen, of Markanar in Kutru zamindari, god of the Wachami clan of Markanar, Irkapal, Karkelli, Kumharmeta and Bodeli in Kutru Zamindari and some adjacent Wachami clan villages in Ahiri zamindari; Wange Muri Pen, of Dhanora in Bijapur tahsil, god of the Kariyami clan of several villages around Dhanora and Thoinar and Pharsegarh sub-zamindaris of Kutru.

or with Dorla neighbours. The clearest sign these retain of their 776
Hill Maria origin is the retention of separate clan-areas, clan-gods
and *modal-waddai* clan-priests for each large clan (*pari* or *katta*) 618
or pair or trio of closely related clans, as distinct from the Bison-horn
Maria institution of one *pen* or clan-god for each of the five groups 615
of clans or phratries (*tarr* or *kutmam*) and every clan (*katta*) included in it, without any fixed phratry-area. On the other hand, each village in the true Bison-horn tracts is said to be the *bhum* of the clan (*katta*) of the *perma* who originally founded it, and, as it is the *bhum* of his clan, he alone can officiate for the village at the ceremonies and sacrifices before the Village Mother, the Dongar Deo, Kodo Deo, Bhu-deo and Bhu-Devi, and the other forms under which the Earth is worshipped at the different agricultural ceremonies.

The Bison-horn country is extensive and, compared to the 776
Hill Maria country, well populated. The villages forming the *bhum*
of even individual *katta* clans may be miles apart, while a village 614
that is the *bhum* of a clan in phratry A may be surrounded by 615
villages that are the *bhum* of clans in phratries B, C, D and E for miles before there is another village of a clan of phratry A. Further, though a village may be the *bhum* of the *perma's* clan, he may easily have only a few other householders of his clan in the village, but several of other kindred and affine clans. At Aranpur, most members of the big and small Marvi, the Hemla and the Oyami clans, all of which are included in the Marvi phratry, did not know the name of the clan-god of their phratry, but suggested vaguely that his *pen-rawar* might be in the Abujhmar hills or in Padar-raj, their name for the plateau around Jagdalpur. Some knew that the god's name was Handa Kosa Pen, and a few said that his *pen-rawar* was at Killepal, nearly sixty miles away, where the great western road from Jagdalpur to Bhopalpatnam approaches the passes descending to the Dantewara valley. At Killepal, however, I had not been shown Handa Kosa Pen; the village is the *bhum* of the Kuhrami clan, which gives its name to the Kuhrami phratry, and the clan members stated that they had no *pen-rawar* of their clan at Killepal, but that Hermraj Pen, their god, was, they had heard, in some village near Orcha in the Abujhmar hills. It was often agreed that a Maria should visit his Pen or clan-god every year in Aghan or Pand month (November-December) and offer a pig or a cock to the god at this annual *pen-jatra* or festival of the *pen*. At Aranpur a few of the older men said that they had long ago visited the Marvi clan-god Handa Kosa Pen at Killepal in their youth, but in recent years no one seemed to have been near. It was agreed that certain social offences could only be expiated by a visit and penal offering to the clan-god.

776 614 615 The elders of the villages can actually often give the names of each of the gods whom they say that each of the five Bison-horn phratries worships: the Markami phratry worships Harma Pen; the Kuhrami phratry give varying names for their god, Hermraj Pen, Perambhoi (the name applied by the Dorlas to their corresponding Perambhoi phratry) or Banian Muttai; the Kawasi phratry worships Babo Herma Pen; the Marvi phratry Handa Kosa Pen; and the Sodi phratry Tul-Muttai Pen, whose *pen-rawar* is at Kamkanar in the Gangalur *pargana* in Bijapur tahsil, where Sodi Harma the *modul-waddai*, was regarded as the headman of all the surrounding Bison-horn villages. But other names are also given, such as Hirangraj, Hingaraj and Belraj for the Kartami clan, Hirmaraj for the Kawasi, Sodi, Markami and Marvi clans, and Hing-hunga and Mundaraj for the Beko and Kalmu clans. I have used the word 'clan' advisedly, because in this list some gods are shared by clans belonging to different phratries; thus Hirmaraj is shared by the Markami and Kartami clans of the Markami phratry and by the Sodi and Marvi clans of the Sodi and Marvi phratries, while of the worshippers of Hing-hunga and Mundaraj the Beko clan belongs to the Kuhrami phratry and the Kalmu clan to the Markami. Use Modia Pen of Ghotpal is restricted to the Lekami clan of that and surrounding villages, which is now considered part of the Kuhrami phratry. Other local log-gods will be found in the heart of the Bison-horn country at such places as Dugeli; some may be the true *pen-rawars* of the phratries, but I have been unable to verify this.

614 615 173 The whole position is, it must be admitted, somewhat confused, but it would be wrong to expect to systematize it. The same confusion will be found again over the totems of the phratries and clans; there are two phratries with the tortoise as totem, and inside the same phratry will be found clans with totems of their own or the totem of other phratries, or no totem at all. The traditions of the Bison-horn Marias all point to their having descended southwards from the Abujhmar hills to colonize their present country, and the presence in their midst of ruined Hindu cities at Dantewara, Barsur, and Bhairamgarh, of traces of forgotten kingdoms at Tirathgarh and Kuakonda, and of isolated villages of Jhari Telangas descended from the subjects of early medieval Telugu kings, point to the truth of the traditions. We have seen how new clans are forming to-day on the southern fringes of the Abujhmar hills, and how the Bison-horn culture is gradually absorbing the southernmost Hill Maria clans, which have, however, not fitted themselves fully as yet into the five-phratry organization, but retain their own clan-gods. The five phratries are named after five principal clans,

the names of which recur not only among Murias in north Bastar, 614
but also among all the Gonds of the Central Provinces. Possibly 615
strong bodies of these clans were the original colonizers, and with
the growth of population in their new surroundings have either 173
thrown off sub-clans or absorbed clans newly descending from the hills or acquiring their culture. It is not surprising that settlers in the tracts farthest from their first settlement should find it difficult to worship at the original shrines of their *pen*, and should either forget them; or here and there make fresh log-gods for themselves, perhaps sharing them with other adjacent clans not necessarily of their own phratries, just as they have learnt, unlike the Hill Marias, to share with other brother-clans and wife-clans village lands which are the *bhum* of their own clan.

The cult of the *pen* log-god of the clan is thus, as may be
expected, considerably weaker among the Bison-horn than among 776
the Hill Marias. Often he is neglected almost entirely in the annual feasts, or vaguely associated with the Departed in the expressions *pen-kanal* or *bhuma-deo* used of the ancestors. Where there is a log-god, he tends to be regarded merely as one of the local godlings that are becoming as numerous among the Bison-horn Marias as among the Gonds of the Central Provinces. Where there is none, occasionally at festivals before the Village Mother or other manifestations of the Earth a stone or two may be set up in his name under a *saja* tree and receive its share of the sacrificial blood
and libations. It is not surprising that, therefore, the *waddai* of 776
the clan-god is more purely a medium among the Bison-horn Marias,
and less of a clan-priest than he is among the Hill Marias, and that 791
most Bison-horn villages have at least one *waddai* who may be possessed not only by the clan-god but by other godlings also; even when he is attached definitely to a log-god at a festival, he may be possessed by him and give oracle on his behalf, but the *perma* of the village is the principal celebrant, and the *waddai*, when not possessed, degenerates into a mere *mantram*-reciting assistant of the *perma*.

The Village Mother and other gods among the Bison-horn Marias

Often there is no hut-temple for any deity among the Bison-horn 776
Marias except one for Danteshwari Mai or Maoli or Mata, whose cults have spread from the Hindu temple of Dantewara, and in time will reach every village of Bastar. The Earth cult, however, remains, as among the Hill Marias, the essential cult. Its chief form is thus the cult of the Village Mother, called Tallin Ochur in the Bison-horn dialect. For all the village ceremonies there is a fixed plot of land in a field belonging to the *perma* and known as the *bhum-jaga*, *hadri-bera* or *wijj-erhu*; *bhum-jaga*

776 means 'the earth-place'; *kadri* is the Bison-horn word for *kasyeq*, the knife carried in the loin-cloth, and the *perma* is sometimes called the *kadri-gaita*. *Wijj-erka* means 'seed-*mahua*'; in most Bison-horn villages there is a sacred *mahua* tree, instead of the *saja* tree that is the rule in hill villages, in the middle of the sacred field, and the tree is the 'seed-*mahua*' because beneath it are held the ceremonies of the important '*Wijja* (seed) *Pandum*'. The *saja* tree remains equally sacred, as will be observed from the way in which its leaves are used in the ceremonies described in the next chapter. Under or near the *mahua* tree is often a wooden post or an upright cube of stone with a sloping top, known generally as Bhimul, which is made as occasion demands to serve as Bhimul Deo, Tallin Uchur, Dongar Deo, Mata, or any other god required; near this the *perma* will clean and plaster a flat piece of ground, known as *khari-mundi*, for sacrificing the victims. Dongar Deo, Kodo Deo and Bhu-deo combined with Bhu-devi and called generally by the Bison-horn Marias of Sukma zamindari Polamraj and Polam-muttai, are all really forms of the Village Mother, or at least of the Earth; there are several other such forms, and, though all are fundamentally the same, they tend gradually to be vaguely differentiated in the minds of the villagers, and soon, no doubt, will be individual godlings, each with his own functions. Bhimul is
776 the rain-giver, who has been Hinduized amongst Central Provinces Gonds and the Murias of the north of Bastar as Bhimsen or Bhima,
781 one of the five Pandava brothers; besides his annual *pandum* in the early spring, he is liable to be treated roughly if the rains are late or scanty. His wooden or stone post is then pelted with dung and filth by abusive females, who challenge him to show his powers by sending his rain to wash himself clean.

Demons

The Bison-horn Marias go much farther than the Hill Marias in deifying the forces of nature. There are the Ban Devi spirits of the forest, Jalkamani the spirit of rivers, and, for nearly every mountain pass, pile of boulders, or precipice, some spirit, all of whom may need propitiation, and some of whom are becoming godlings with a cult. The Hill Marias have a vague dread of evil spirits of the mountains, which they call *rau*; amongst the Murias and Bhattras there are other demons such as Uran Rau who blows away the grain with the chaff at winnowing, and Chitkar Rau who brings wild animals to trample down the crops; but the only *rau* to whom I have heard a name given by Hill Marias is Raja Rau, the demon of the Raughat pass in Antagarh tahsil, held to be a very Raja of the *rau* because he caused mountain-sickness to the first European surveyor seen in Bastar. All Marias also speak with fear of a water-witch in the

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

form of a great serpent, known as *Tondetaras*, haunting river rapids 776
and waterfalls, the mere sight of whom is fatal.

The traces of totemism amongst Hill and Bison-horn Marias 781
will be described in the chapter on social organization. It may briefly be stated here that there appears to be no connexion between the totems and the clan-god, and that at no ceremony, either clan or village, or domestic, is the totem ever mentioned or worshipped. It gets a vague respect, perhaps an occasional *salaam*, from members of the totem, and they do not touch, kill or eat it if they can avoid doing so.

Totems

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

CHAPTER XI

THE ANNUAL RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES OF THE BISON-HORN MARIAS

796 IN Chapter VII, on Maria agriculture, which was treated chiefly from the point of view of Hill Maria agriculture as being far less advanced than Bison-horn Maria agriculture, the Hill Maria festivals and ceremonies were described. The Bison-horn Marias have many more ceremonies and a much more elaborate ceremonial, and though these are as closely connected with the agricultural calendar of the year as those of the Hill Marias, they are best described here in a separate chapter than in Chapter VII where a description of them would have wrecked the balance of the description of agriculture.

The Irpu Pandum

It would, from the agricultural point of view, perhaps be logical to start the account of the *pandum* festivals and *weta* ceremonial hunts from the Kare Pandum of Magh month, held early in February, because until it has taken place it is *melo* or taboo to cut timber for *erka* and *parka* cultivation; in another sense, however, it is one of the last festivals of the year, for its holding also signalizes the lifting of the taboo against the reaping of the forest grass crop and of bamboos, and it follows soon after the Jata Pandum at which new *urad*, beans and pulses are eaten for the first time. The Bhimul Pandum that comes next, in the middle of February, is also designed to secure satisfactory rain for the coming year, but is not described first because it makes the account of all the *pandum* clearer and briefer to begin with those on which there is the fullest information. The Irpu or Idu Pandum, or *mahua* flowers first-fruits ceremony, which is held soon after the Bhimul Pandum, is therefore taken as the first ceremony of the year. In some parts it is combined with the Marka Pandum, the mango first-fruits ceremony; but, at all events to the south of the Bison-horn country, it is quite separate and more important, as the *mahua* tree plays a more important part than the mango in not only the economic but also the religious life of the people. The *perma* of the village fixes the day, which is always a Friday in the bright half of the month, in consultation with the headman (*peda*) and elders about a week beforehand. On the [534] night before the ceremony all the men observe sexual continence,[1] and in the morning assemble at the *mahua* tree in the *perma's* field, the *perma* bringing a cock and a little milk and husked rice. 796 The *perma* cleans a small rectangle at the foot of the tree, sets the egg upright on it, and strews the rice in front of the egg. The cock is set down on its feet, and as soon as it pecks up a grain or two of the rice, the *perma* cuts its throat in the name of the Village Mother, whom he prays to accept the egg and the cock offered by the village, and to bless them with a bumper crop of *mahua* flowers and fruit. He then pours milk over the trunk of the tree and some of the clusters of *mahua* flowers, and prays to the milk-spirits Pal-mu'ito and Pal-mutta'i (Milk-old-man and Milk-old-woman) to shower upon them *mahua* flowers fat with milk. Next he throws the egg over the tree, calling on Nus-mu'ito and Nus-muttai (Insect-old-man and Insect-old-woman; *nus* is a grub or insect that attacks the ends of the twigs from which burst the *mahua* flowers) not to damage the flowers. Then all the men present quickly gather up dead *mahua* leaves lying around beneath the tree and put them into the baskets that they use for collecting *mahua* flowers, pretending that they are flowers; the idea, of course, is to act the gathering of a crop of flowers as thick as the carpet of dead leaves, and to persuade the trees in sympathy with this magic to yield a generous crop. The *perma* then takes the sacrificed cock as his portion, and all disperse to their homes. Before this ceremony has been held it is taboo to collect *mahua* flowers.

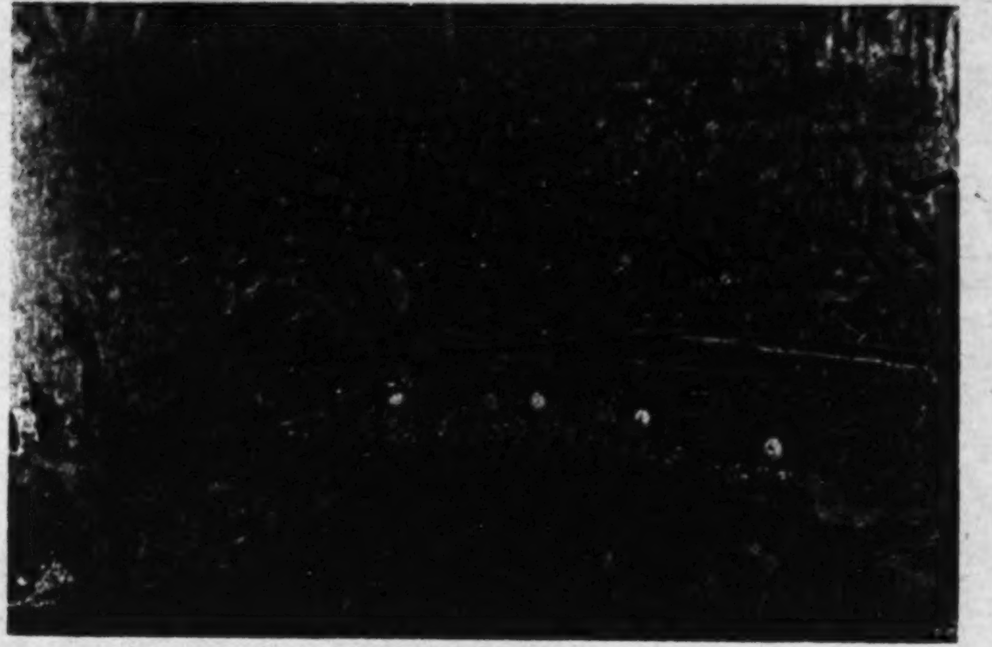
---

[1] Sexual continence is the rule on the night before every *pandum*.

The Marka Pandum

The mango first-fruits ceremony is held generally a little later, in March, the *perma* convening a similar meeting of the elders to fix the day as soon as he sees that the young fruit has formed on the trees, and to arrange either for a *sari-bori* village subscription for buying the sacrificial victims or for getting the victims from those whose turn it is to give them at this *pandum*. We have seen already (pp. 165-6) that this is sometimes preceded by a ceremonial fishing beat or *weta*, [769] and by pouring of water in the name of the Departed. All the males of the village assemble on the morning of the *pandum* by the *perma's kadri-bera* field, the head of each family bringing a pig or a cock, a pot of *landa* or *mahua* spirit, cooking pots, and a pound of husked rice or *kutki* for each member of his family present. For this festival sometimes instead of using the *kadri-bera* field they resort to a mango grove, a grove of trees by a stream, or a clump of forest trees thickly covered with creepers, often on a hill-top, and known as a *deo-kot*; the site is always reserved for such ceremonies, and it is taboo to pluck even a leaf in them. There should be a sacred *saja* tree there. At the foot of this tree a space is cleaned and smeared with cow-dung and water, over which a table-stone is set up on three or four small stones, to serve as the *gadi* or throne of the god, in this *pandum* generally known as Kodo Pen. The *perma* puts a round white stone on this throne in Kodo Pen's name, strews wet rice on the ground in front of the stone, and arranges eggs at the side of the rice. The *perma* then puts his own cock down to see if it will eat the rice, as in the case of the sacrificial victims at the Irpu Pandum, and then in turn the cock produced by each head of a family is put through the test; the process is called the *tohana* of the cocks. If any cock refuses to touch the rice, the *perma* asks its owner whether he has promised the god any other sacrifice, and if the owner says he has no recollection of having done so, the *perma* turns to the cock, and says, 'If he promised an egg, I command you to pick up the rice; if he promised a pig, I command you, etc.' and so on, suggesting further victims; and the owner is expected to provide the last victim suggested before the cock picks up the rice. When all have been through the *tohana*, the *perma* with the sacred knife cuts off the heads of the cocks and pigs, cutting them from the throat upwards, and sprinkles the blood of each victim over the god, the rice and the eggs. He heaps the heads together, and hands the bodies back to the owners of the victims. He then pours a little *landa* and *mahua* spirit on the white stone representing the god, places two or three unripe green mangoes on the 'throne' beside him, bends to the earth before him with his palms pressed flat on the earth, belches, and prays to the god to save them from all sickness and adversity, now that they have offered him the new mangoes. He then bows his head to the ground, rises and stands facing the sun, whom, with folded hands, he calls on to be a witness that the *pandum* has been performed. When the *mahua* first-fruits ceremony is combined with the *Marka Pandum*, *mahua* flowers are offered along with the green mangoes, and cooked and eaten at the feast that follows. After addressing the sun, the *perma* gives back to each family the head of its cock, and these are fried and eaten with *landa* or *mahua* spirit. The men of each family then cook the rice and the bodies of their sacrificed pigs or cocks in the cooking pots that they have brought with them, along with some green mangoes and *mahua* flowers; and they sit in a circle and eat the food, washing it down with more liquor, before returning with their cooking pots to their houses. The *perma* cooks and eats his own sacrificial meat with his brothers and sons apart from the rest, and hangs his cooking pot with the sacred knife inside it on some tree in the sacred grove before going home. On the next day, as after most of these *pandum* feasts, the head of each family observes in his house the *Hara Tindana* (Halbi, *Basi Tihar*) or 'remains-eating' feast, to which he bids his womenfolk and his friends, and brother-clan and wife-clan relatives from

PLATE XVI



THE SACRIFICE BEFORE THE *WIJJA-WETA*
The offerings before the altar of bows

[facing p. 210]

[face p. 222

778
796

796 [784] other villages. Though this is called the 'remains-eating' feast, yet actually fresh meat is killed and cooked, because women and girls, who are not allowed to attend the sacrifices, are equally debarred from eating any part of the sacrificial victims. The day ends in *landa* drinking and dancing. [535] In these first-fruits *pandum* dances the bison-horn head-dresses used not to be worn, and in the dance following the *pandum* for new *mahua* and new mangoes men and women dancers dance together, and not separately as in all other Bison-horn Maria dances.

The Wijja Pandum, Wijja Weta and Jur Weta

We come now to the great vernal sowing festival with its attendant dancing and hunting that takes place on or near the full moon day of Chait (March-April), and corresponds to the Chait-rai festival of the Bhattras, Parjas and Murias. It starts on a Sunday, five or six days after the *Marka Pandum*. [223] *Landa* is brewed in profusion in every house for days in advance, and as much *mahua* liquor procured from the excise shops as household funds and the excise rules permit. [834] Sexual continence is, as in all these ceremonies, the rule for the night before the festival begins, and in some villages is ensured by all the men sleeping together that night and until the last ceremony is over, generally in the *kadri-bera* field or at the place from which the ritual *weta* hunt sets off.

The *perma* fasts next morning, and after the men of the village have had their morning meal goes at about noon to the *mahua* tree in the *kadri-bera* or *wijj-erku* (see pp. 205-6) field, with a supply of rice and an egg, and the men accompany him. He cuts a small bough off the tree, to which in some villages he first sacrifices a black cock. He clears and plasters with cow-dung and water the usual small rectangle of ground, and in the centre makes a hole in which he plants the *mahua* bough and a plant of *dab* (*Pollinia argentea*) grass. In front of this he sprinkles rice and egg-shells, in which he sets an egg upright on its end in the name of the Village Mother, or of Bhu-deo and Bhu-devi. [515] He then takes up a *datun* or tooth-cleaning twig of *mahua*, splits it longitudinally in his teeth, and throws the split pieces three times on the ground. [787] For the pieces to fall one on the other like a saltire each time is the best of omens for the coming hunt and the ensuing harvest; for them to fall apart is a bad omen. 796 778 Sometimes this consultation of the omens does not take place in the *kadri-bera* field, but in the forest at the place from which the ritual hunt is to start; there sometimes a rough altar of bows and arrows, as in the illustration opposite, is made, and the *perma*, facing the east, places on the ground before the altar three heaps of mixed bran and egg-shells in the name of each of the three Ban Kunwarin or Forest-maidens, and on each

796 heap offers an egg and a tooth-stick (*datun*), sometimes also a miniature bow and arrow; he then takes up each tooth-stick in
[779] turn, splits it and throws down the split halves to test the omens in the way already described, after praying with folded hands to the Forest-maidens for success in the hunt and protection from wild beasts. Then he takes an arrow off the altar, and, holding it by the shaft just above the feathering, cuts the top of each egg with the sharp edge of the arrow-head.

796 224 The omens having thus been taken, and the bows and arrows of the altar, if any, reclaimed by their owners, all the men go off with their weapons in the *weta* ritual hunt to beat the forest for game. The women appear with pots full of cow-dung and water, into which they dip sprays of leaf and shower the foul water with fouler abuses on any laggards. If any animal is slain, the shedding of much blood on the ground is regarded as foreshadowing plentiful rainfall and a rich harvest; on the spot where it falls they cut little bits off the tips of its ears, nose, tongue, feet and tail, place each bit on a separate *saja* leaf on the ground in the name of the Forest-maidens or of Karenga Deo, and pray for a continuance of this good fortune. At the end of the hunt they take the carcasses of the animals back to the *mahua* bough erected in the name of the Village Mother in the *kadri-bera* field, and leave them there. They then go home for supper.

796 Towards midnight each man returns to the *kadri-bera* with his bow and arrows, a small packet of *kutki* and other grain seeds wrapped up in leaves, a little *mahua* liquor and a white cock; a pig is also brought for all the villagers. Some villages do not expect each man to bring a cock, but purchase a number of cocks by *sari-bori* subscription. The men hand over the packets of seed to the *perma*, who piles them on the ground in front of the *mahua* bough and places his sacrificial knife beside them. He then prostrates himself before the *mahua* bough and prays to the Village Mother for good and timely rain and bumper crops. He then puts each cock and the pig through the *tohana* rice-eating test, and sacrifices them one by one, cutting their heads off from the throat upwards, piling the heads all together near the *mahua* bough, and holding each body over the pile of seed-packets and the *mahua* bough to soak them well with blood; he then throws the bodies aside. Next he breaks with his knife in the Mother's name the egg which he had set up in the morning, and pours some *mahua* spirit on the ground before the *mahua* bough. The *perma* and the men of his family then roast and eat the heads of the cocks and the pig, and each other family the body of the cock contributed by it; when cocks have been bought by subscription, the *perma* slices

them up and distributes them. The pig, cooked with rice, is next apportioned among all present and eaten.

Meanwhile some boil the rice brought by each villager, and the carcasses of the animals killed in the afternoon ritual hunt are skinned, cut up and roasted, after the head and the legs below the knees and hocks have been cut off, taken to the hut-temple of Mata and tied with ropes to wooden roof-posts in front of the goddess. The *perma* and all the men, when the meat is cooked, drink liquor and eat the meat; by that time, however, many have had enough, and carry off their share to their houses to eat later.

Women take no part in this feast and may not be present, except that they are expected to meet the successful huntsmen on their return and dance and sing in front of the bodies of the animals killed in the hunt as they are taken to the *kadri-bera*.

When the eating is over, the *perma* takes up his own packet of blood-stained seed, and hands each man his packet. They take them off to their houses, and place them carefully on the storage platform inside the *wijjalon* room of their houses.

By this time it is daylight, and they must all start out on another ritual hunt after the usual preliminary offerings to the Forest-maidens and omen-taking. If any animal is slain, the usual portions are then and there offered to the Forest-maidens on *saja* leaves in the forest, and at the end of the hunt the bodies are brought back, greeted as before by dancing women, and taken, not to the *kadri-bera*, but to a shed prepared in the village for that purpose. Sexual intercourse is no longer taboo, and the dancing [334]
that follows ends in the men getting their own back for the abuses with which the women drove them out to the hunt.

The next day they cut up the carcasses left in the shed overnight, and divide the meat; first the head, intestines and the legs below the knees and hocks are set on one side; then the man who killed the animal in the hunt is given the rest of the off hind leg and sometimes some meat from each side of the backbone, the *peda* (not in all villages), the saddle, and the *waddai*, if any, or the *kanal-gaita*[1] (again in some villages only), the liver; and lastly the balance is divided among all the men, including those who have already received privileged portions. Each takes off the meat to his own house, for the *Hara Tindana* remains-eating feast for his women, and brother-clan and wife-clan relatives. But before they start this feast, one of the villagers on behalf of the village takes a cock and an egg to the priest of Mata's hut-temple. The priest sacrifices them to her, and in return restores the heads and legs tied up in the temple after the first ritual hunt. The villager brings them back

[1] Priest of the Departed, alias *pitor-gaita*. See p. 217 below.

796 to the shed where the animals killed in the second ritual hunt were kept and cut up, and there they are cooked along with the head, intestines and lower legs of those animals, and eaten by the men of the village.

This should be followed on the next Sunday by the *Jur-weta* for the whole *pargana* at the chief village of the *pargana*, the *perma* of that village acting as the officiant before the altar of bows and arrows erected in the name of the Forest-maidens, and the *perma* and elders of each village offering an egg and a tooth-stick to be placed by the officiating *perma* in the bran-heap of each of the three Forest-maidens. The *weta* is sometimes followed by worship of the clan-god and the *Pen-karsita* festival, except in villages where that takes place at the Mandai or Deogudi Jatra on or about the full moon day of Magh. It has already been said that the *Jur-weta* is now abandoned in most *parganas* because nearly all except small game has been exterminated. Actually, however, the photograph illustrating the sacrifice to the Forest-maidens, facing page 211, was taken at a *Jur-weta* and not at the *wijja-weta* of the preceding week.

796
241
587
It remains to state what each man does with the packet of consecrated seed which he takes back from the Wijja Pandum to his house. Before seed-time, he calls in a medium (*wadde*), through whom he consults the oracle as to the propitious day and hour for the field sowing ceremony. At the appointed time, taking care to be overlooked by no one, he takes to his field a sowing basket containing the consecrated seed mixed with other seed, a little cooked rice and a cock. In the field he clears a little plot of ground, spreads rice on it and, as soon as the cock starts to eat it, cuts its head off from the throat upwards in the name of the Earth-god, and sprinkles its blood on the ground and on the seed in the basket. He prepares a small piece of the field for sowing, and on it sows three handfuls of the blood-sprinkled seed. He then cooks and eats the body of the cock in the field, leaving the head there, and makes his way back to his house, still trying to avoid being seen. After this ceremony he is free to complete his sowing when he likes.

Hareli

796 Hareli is not observed by all Bison-horn Marias, but is universal among Parjas and Bhattras and the Jagdalpur Murias, and, under its common local name of Amavas, amongst Halbas and other Hindus of the State. The Dantewara and Barsur temples have spread its observance among the Bison-horn villages of Jagdalpur and Dantewara tahsils, and the villagers generally wait till the temples have celebrated the festival before celebrating it in their villages. On the morning of the day on which they have decided to hold it, the village elders assemble at the

perma's house and take him to the hut of the log-god, if there is one in the village, or to Mata's hut (the Mata-guri). No animal is sacrificed, but the *perma* lights a fire in front of the god or goddess, burns a little ghee or sal (*Shorea robusta*) resin in the fire, and bows before the deity; each elder does the same. The *perma* then fixes in the thatched roof of the shrine a leafy spray of the marking-nut tree (*Semecarpus anacardium*) and a spray of the *sitawari* creeper, and sends the congregation out to the forest to get *tendu* (*Diospyros melanoxylon*) branches to stick in the centre of each of their fields. They adorn the *tendu* branches at the top with a leafy marking-nut twig and a spray of *sitawari*, and fix them upright in the centre of each rice, *erka* and *penda* field, sometimes pouring a little milk over them; the idea seems to be to indicate by the branch a tall and well-branched plant such as each rice or *kuthi* seed sown in the field should produce. They then bathe in the nearest pool or river, and fix a spray of marking-nut and of *sitawari* in the thatch of their houses. They then eat roast pork or fowl in their houses, and drink *landa*, entertaining those too poor to afford a dinner of their own, and giving salt to their cattle. Nothing is offered to the Departed at this festival.

The Kurum Pandum

The Kurum Pandum is observed towards the end of August, and is the earliest of the new-eating or first-fruits ceremonies of the cultivated crops, in this case the early-ripening millets off the *erka* and *penda* fields, especially *chikma* (*Panicum miliare*). It is sometimes called Kadi Pandum. In ordinary villages where there is no log-god the first part of the celebrations takes part at the *kadri-bera* field before the Bhimul post, which for this ceremony is regarded as the Village Mother. Early in the morning of the appointed day the women clean the ground in front of their houses, wash their floors with cow-dung and water, and then go to a pool to bathe and wash their husbands' and children's clothes. Those who can afford it get new clothes for the *pandum*. Towards noon the men assemble at the *kadri-bera* field, and the usual rectangle is cleared and cleaned by the *perma* around the Bhimul post; but for this ceremony they make a dwarf fence of *saja* twigs stuck in the ground on three sides of the rectangle, and carpet the rectangle with *saja* leaves. The *perma* stands to the west of the Bhimul post, and, facing the east, addresses it as the Village Mother, praying to her and bowing before her. The villagers subscribe for a pig, a white cock and eggs for a sacrifice; sometimes even now a young bull or heifer is stolen for this purpose. The *perma*, as usual, brings wet rice for the *tohana* test of the victims, and spreads it on the *saja* leaves, laying the eggs in a row before the goddess. He sacrifices the cock and

796 pig, sprinkles their blood over the goddess and over each of the *saja* leaves, and breaks the top of each of the eggs with his knife. Then he offers the goddess ears of *chikma*, other early millets, and mountain rice; if the latter is not yet in ear, he offers a flowering rice [788] stalk. He then prostrates himself with the palms of his hands flat on the ground, belches, and prays the goddess as their mother to accept these first-fruits, to grant them grace to have their new-eating feast, and to save her witless children from all troubles and adversity. He then hands each man one of the bloodstained *saja* leaves, and, leaving someone to watch over the slain victims, all go and bury the leaves in their fields. Each man then brings a handful of old rice from his house to the *kadri-bera* field, and hands it over to the *perma*, who cooks the bodies of the victims and the rice separately, and distributes them to the men, who eat their share there.

Meanwhile the women, for whom it has been taboo to attend [784] the ceremony in the *kadri-bera* field and the burial of the leaves, will have prepared meal from the new millets and mountain rice; the grains are still rather green, and are roughly threshed, parched [252] in a broken earthen crock held over the fire, pounded with the *uspal* husker, winnowed free of husks, and ground between two hand mill-stones with a quantity of salt; some mix in a little *gur* sugar. The wife of each head of a family cooks the new flour in a Hanal Kunda or Pot of the Departed (not, of course, that in which oil, etc., is placed in the name of the newly dead), along with new vegetables from the *bari*, other than gourds, beans and cucumbers. When the head of the family returns from the sacrificial meal already described, he brings with him the junior members of his family, but *not* his wife-clan relatives, and some of them bring small [769] chickens. He sacrifices these to the Departed, offers them some of the new flour and vegetables, and pours a libation of *mahua* spirit and *landa* on the floor of the corner of the *wijja-lon* room that is dedicated to the cult of the Departed. The new flour and vegetables are then eaten in his house by them, their wives and their unmarried children; but no one of any other clan may participate, and on that day no one must give anything out of his house, not even fire from his hearth, to anyone of another clan.

On the next day, however, there is the usual remains-eating feast (*Hara Tindana*) in their houses, to which they are free to invite friends, brother-clan and wife-clan relatives, whom they regale on *mahua* spirit and on *landa*. In the evening they dance the *koriam* dance without their bison-horn head-dresses, but with men and women dancing separately in their usual way.

In villages where there is a log-god and a *Mataguri* or hut-shrine of Mata, the sacrifices on the first day are made before each, the

perma with three or four mediums officiating at the former, and 796
the priest of Mata (*Mata-pujari*) at the latter. In some villages
there is a separate hut close to the shrine (*pen-rawar*) of the log-god
or clan-god and to the *Mataguri*, and a separate priest of the
Departed called generally *Pitar-gaita*, but sometimes *Dhuma-gaita*
or *Hanal-gaita*, the use of the Hindu term *pitar* for the local terms [177]
dhuma and *hanal* being significant of the way in which Hinduism is
gradually modifying tribal religion. At the Ghotpal Kurum
Pandum, for example, on the 9th September 1930, the men assembled
with the *perma* outside the *pen-rawar* of Use Modia Pen along with
the men of two adjacent Lekami villages. The *pen* log-god was
brought out and set down on four stone slabs set up as posts. The
proceedings started with the *Pitar-gaita* bringing two new earthen
pots and about half a pound each of new *chikma* and new mountain
rice to a separate shed at the side of the *pen-rawar*. He kindled
a fire, and in one pot cooked small quantities of the new *chikma*,
set this out on three *mahua* leaves as an offering to the Departed, [769]
and attached a fringe of rice plants in ear to the roof of the shed.
He then started to cook the rest of the new *chikma* and new rice
in the other pot, sitting in the shed, while the others present went
to attend the sacrifices in front of the log-god. These were
conducted in much the same way as those already described as made
usually before the Village Mother; but there was no sprinkling of
blood on *saja* leaves or burial of the leaves in the fields, the *perma*,
who acted as clan-priest, washed the mouths and feet of the pigs
and cocks before applying the *tohana* test, and a *wadde* medium sat
by the side of the log-god reciting '*mantram*' as the *perma*
sacrificed each cock and pig. The *perma* then poured three libations
each of *mahua* spirit and *landa* in front of the log-god. All the
men then returned to the *Pitar-gaita's* shed, and sat in a circle
round it, while the *Pitar-gaita* stuck a pinch of the cooked *chikma*
and rice on the centre of each man's forehead, just as Hindus apply
the *tika*. Thereafter all went back to the *pen-rawar*, and first the
perma, then the *Pitar-gaita*, then the *pada* headmen of the three
villages taking part in the ceremony, and last eleven or twelve
village elders saluted everyone present and drank a leaf-cupful first
of *mahua* spirit and then of *landa*. Then the sacrificed cocks and
pigs were cooked, and all the men sat in a circle and were given each
two leaf-cupfuls of *landa* to drink and two pieces of the cooked meat.
All ended by drinking some *mahua* spirit and the whole feast was
over by 9 p.m., when they dispersed to their houses without dancing.
No females had been present. They had the usual family new-eating next day, with offerings to the Departed inside the house.
Ghotpal and some other villages have no dancing at this *pandum*.

796 Nowhere, so far as can be ascertained, are any offerings made at the *urashal* menhir stones for the Departed.

After this *pandum* everyone is free to eat the new early millets and garden vegetables other than gourds, cucumbers, beans and pulses. The practice as to mountain rice varies, for there is still the Korta Pandum or rice first-fruits ceremony to follow. In some places people are free to use and cook the new mountain rice in any way they like after the Kurum Pandum. In others it must be cooked or roasted without being first washed in water until the Nuka Nordana Pandum has been held, which coincides roughly with Diwali.

The Korta Pandum

The Korta Pandum comes about a month after the Kurum Pandum, and celebrates the first eating of the new rice of the main crop, and of new cucumbers, pumpkins and gourds. Unlike the Kurum Pandum, it is a purely domestic ceremony with no public offerings, though the date for it is fixed for the whole village by the usual elders' meeting. It takes place in the first or second week of Kuar, i.e. in early October. Before dawn of the day before the festival the head of each family tries to get to his fields without being seen and reaps enough of the new rice for the morrow's ceremony, for which it is threshed, parched, husked and winnowed in readiness. *Landa* is prepared, and *mahua* spirit bought. On the appointed morning the new [769] rice is cooked in the Pot of the Departed by the housewife, along with the flesh of the goat, cock or pig sacrificed to the Departed by the head of each family, and eaten by the men and women of the family (affines being excluded) in the way already described for the domestic ceremony of the Kurum Pandum. All take *landa* and liquor, and then in most villages the men don their dancing head-dresses, and sing and dance from house to house, exchanging visits and drinking *landa* with all their neighbours. There are the usual remains-eating feasts given next day for brother-clan and wife-clan relatives from other villages, with more singing and dancing.

The Nuka Nordana Pandum

The literal meaning of '*nuka nordana*' is 'husked-grain (*indice, chawal*) grinding'. The festival is not universal among the Bison-horn Marias, and is held at about the beginning of the third week of Kartik month (November). It is sometimes spoken of as Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights; but no Maria houses are illuminated for it. Other local names are Pit Phorni (Halbi) and Deuthni. The ceremony should be held before the clan-god or log-god, but in villages where there is none it takes place in the *hadri-bera* by the usual Bhimul post, and, as for the Marka Pandum, a table-stone with a white pebble on it may be erected in the name of the clan-god under a *saja* tree. The *perma* sacrifices cocks and a pig or goat on behalf of the village in the usual way, and washes some new husked rice and *kutki* and offers it to the god. The men cook and eat the sacrificial meat then and there. The wife-clan relatives may be present, but in most villages are not allowed to participate in the sacrificial rice and meat and are supplied with other rice and meat which they cook separately. The usual remains-eating feast takes place in the houses next day. 796

The Jata Pandum

At the Jata Pandum, held somewhere near the full moon of Pus (December-January), they celebrate the eating of the first new beans, pulses, and the latest ripening grains. There is the usual public sacrifice for the men before the log-god or the Village Mother. In the south, towards the Dorla border, the festival is known as Chikur Pandum, and the sacrifices are always to a table-stone beneath a *saja* tree known as Dhania Deo, which, like the Bhattra Dhani, appears to be only another form of the earth-god. The only special feature of this *pandum* is that the domestic sacrifice and libations to the Departed in the house are often followed by a ceremony for weaning suckling children, the first food given being some of the rice and sacrificial meat cooked in the Pot of the Departed. [769 852]

The Kare Pandum

This takes place in Magh (January-February), soon after the Jata Pandum, and, as already observed, is preceded by the *Kare Weta* in which fields and open spaces are beaten for small game. I was unable to ascertain what other special features, if any, the festival has, or whether new grass and new bamboo are offered to the gods. Until the festival has been held it is *melo* or taboo to cut grass or bamboos or to start felling timber for *erka*, *parka* and *penda* cultivation. [784]

The Bhimul Pandum

The Bhimul Pandum comes very soon after the Kare Pandum. 796 I have no detailed information. But it is a ceremony for ensuring a good rainfall in the coming monsoon. 778 It takes place by the Bhimul post in the *kadri-bera*, over which a booth of boughs is erected. Men and women attend. The booth is decorated with strings of mango leaves. The *perma* sacrifices a white cock and an egg, and pours *landa* over the Bhimul post; and men and women then empty over the post baskets containing a little of every kind of field produce. Men and women then sit in the open, and consume *landa*. All night the village women dance, led by the *perma's* wife with an empty *landa* pot on her head or in her arms. [535]

The Bhimul Pandum is really the last of the *pandum* held in all villages. 796 It only remains to mention the Mandai or Deoguri

The Mandai

796 Jatra, which is held generally about the full moon of Magh, but in some villages is part of the round of festivities and hunting connected with the Wijja Pandum in the month of Chait. The Mandai is a Hinduization of the old Pen-karsita. Throughout Northern Bastar a Mandai Jatra is held at all big centres at about this time, culminating in the great Mandai in the open space called Kodo Bhata in Jagdalpur, which the Chief should attend in state, processing on elephant seven times round the fair, accompanied by innumerable mediums leaping and dancing possessed by their gods. The Hill Maria counterpart is the Koqsar on the day after the Pupal Korta Tindana. The Bison-horn Pen-karsita tends to resemble the Mandai of the bigger villages of the north, all the local gods being brought out and the *wadde* mediums, possessed by their godlings, leaping and dancing wildly about. The special Pen-karsita drum rhythm and dance have already been referred to.

Conclusion

These are the main festivals, though here and there there are further *pandum*, such as the sacrifice offered at the base of the first toddy-palm to be tapped among the southern Bison-horn Marias. Nor must it be expected that in every *pargana* or village the local *pandum* will conform exactly to the descriptions in this chapter, which represent the principal features of *pandum* actually seen in Dugeli, villages around Kuakonda, Aranpur, Ghotpal and villages in Sukma zamindari. The festivals are far more numerous and more elaborate than those of the Hill
796 Marias. It is an obvious suggestion that if the Bison-horn Maria tradition of migration from the Abujhmar hills be correct, the
177 accretions to the hill cults represent entirely the influence of the old Telanga Hindu centres of Dantewara, Barsur and Bhairamgarh. But this does not account for such features as the soaking of the first seeds to be sown in the coming harvest in the blood of the animals sacrificed in the Wijja Pandum, or the burial of the blood-stained *saja* leaves in the fields during the Kurum Pandum, which have suggestions of connexion with the Khond Meriah ritual; or for such magico-religious pieces of ritual as the gathering of *mahua* leaves in the baskets used for collecting *mahua* flowers, the dancing of the *perma's* wife with an empty *landa* pot on her head, or the spilling of milk on the *mahua* buds. Primitive cults are influenced by Hinduism, but also react on it; and it seems to have been part of the policy of the Bastar Chiefs to identify themselves as much as they could with the religious life of their primitive subjects, save those in the inaccessible Abujhmar hills. Much of the long Dasehra ritual at Jagdalpur is elaborated from primitive ideas. Tribal gods have been recognized, and many are allowed to join in the Mandai

procession at Jagdalpur. The Dantewara temple observes several 196
of the local *pandum*, if in a Hinduized form, while the ceremonies
of the isolated Telanga villages now surrounded by a sea of Bison- 177
horn Maria villages have become little different from those of the Bison-horn Marias. Hinduization there is, and has long been; but that alone does not account for the differences between the ritual of the Bison-horn Maria and that of the Hill Maria and his Muria neighbours. The physical differences between the two sections of Marias are slight, but their traditions are different, and at least it is clear that they represent different waves of migration. The remarkable differences of dancing, drumming, singing and ritual, and in the intonation, words and inflexions of their dialects, which make them mutually unintelligible, cannot be explained merely by saying that the Bison-horn Marias are 'more advanced' and more in contact with Hinduism and Telugu influences than the Hill Marias.

Note.

Mr. E. S. Hyde, I.C.S., has, since this book went to the press, 241
kindly sent me a note of an interesting recent investigation by the
police at Madder [illegible] Bhopalpatnam zamindari. A Mohammedan 189
woman asleep on the night of June 13th, 1937 in her courtyard was slightly wounded with [illegible] knife or arrow over her right ribs, and woke to see what she believed to be two Marias running away. The police enquiry elicited information that many Marias in Kutru zamindari (i.e. Bison-horn Marias or Hill Marias of the plains in long contact with Dorla or Bison-horn influence; the true Hill Marias would not venture down to Madder), before sowing try to get some human blood, especially of women, to mix with their seed. Their usual method is to go to distant villages by night and inflict slight wounds on sleeping women with a knife or arrow. They then take the blood-stained weapon home, and wash it with water, in which they steep their rice seed before sowing, confident of securing thereby a bumper crop. Before wounding their victim they offer near her cot a little rice and turmeric; such an offering was found near the Madder woman's cot.

CHAPTER XII

THE CULT OF THE DEPARTED ; MAGIC AND WITCHCRAFT ; OMENS ; BELIEFS ABOUT THE PHENOMENA OF NATURE

A. The Cult of the Departed

IN the preceding chapters there have been many references to the *Hanal* or Departed. In Chapter VI were described the *lonu*[1] or Room of the Departed in the Hill Maria house, with the Pot of the Departed and the Hearth of the Departed, and the corresponding *wijjalon*[2] room in the Bison-horn Maria house ; in Chapter VII the reader will have seen how the Departed are regarded by the Hill Maria as having the power to influence sowing and harvesting, and are therefore propitiated at seed-time by the *wijj-ahk*[3] or 'seed-leaves' ceremony and at the new-eating festivals[4] by the wives offering the new grains before the Pot of the Departed after cooking them on the Hearth of the Departed, and by the husband in the morning depositing three leaves with the new food by the roadside as offerings to them. Of all Marias Chapter VIII[5] has told of the universal practice of pouring a drop or two of intoxicating drink as a libation to the Departed before drinking, and Chapter IX[6] of a burning log from the Hearth of the Departed in the *hasyeq-gaita's* or *perma's* house being used to fire the first pile of dry wood for *penda* cultivation and to light the fires for cooking sacrificial meals. We have seen also in the last chapter how the Bison-horn Maria (*a*) offers water to the Departed at the time of the Marka Pandum[7] ; (*b*) has the new grain and vegetables cooked in the Pot of the Departed by his wife and sacrifices cocks or other victims to them in the domestic ceremonies in connexion with the Kurum Pandum,[8] (*c*) the Korta Pandum[9] and (*d*) the Jata Pandum[10]; (*e*) has in some villages a separate priest of the Departed known as the Pitar-Gaita[11] or Hanal-Gaita who has special duties to perform at the public ceremonies of the Kurum Pandum (possibly at other *pandum* also, but no enquiry was made on this point) ; and (*f*) at the weaning ceremony at the Jata Pandum[12] makes his children eat as their

[1] See p. 114.
[2] See p. 123.
[3] See p. 133.
[4] See p. 139.
[5] See p. 170.
[6] See p. 190.
[7] See p. 209 ; cf. also pp. 163-6.
[8] See p. 216.
[9] See p. 218.
[10] See p. 219.
[11] See p. 217.
[12] See p. 219.

first solid food the new grain and meat cooked in the Pot of the Departed.

It will be seen in the sections of the next part of this book that deal with birth, marriage and funeral customs that there are further rites, either indicating the power of the Departed to influence the fortunes of their posterity, or designed to propitiate them. Such are the searching of the body of a new-born baby for the birth-marks of some ancestor; the libations to the Departed in the betrothal and marriage ceremonies of all Marias and the sacrificial meal given to Bison-horn bride and bridegroom before the Pot of the Departed in the bridegroom's father's house; the ascertaining at Hill Maria funerals whether the death was due to the wrath of the Departed; the special precautions taken in the obsequies of persons killed by tigers or lightning, victims of small-pox and pregnant women; and in Hill and Bison-horn obsequies the attempt finally to lay or placate the Departed by the erection of a menhir in the *kotokal* or *uraskal*.

The word *hanal* is simply a past participial form of the verb *handana*, 'to go'; 'Departed' is thus a literal translation. It has a sound of finality about it, as though the dead, once departed, were finished with; and indeed men of the hill clans that do not erect menhirs for the dead are apt to assert that this is the case, and that they never worry further about their dead after they have been cremated or buried. Yet there are many signs that even they do not really think so. All Marias, it has already been observed,[1] are shy of talking about the Departed, though it takes little to get them to discuss other religious beliefs and ceremonies. I have had Hill Marias denying that they do anything for the Departed or offer them anything at death or the new-eating festivals, and then either found at their new graves a wooden *hanal-gutta* post and a stone [764] *hanal-garya* seat for the Departed, with a sacrificed cow's tail and foot hanging from a tree close by, or discovered a Pot and Hearth of the Departed in their *lonu*. There is almost certainly not a Maria who does not believe that for some time, at least, after their death the Departed are to be feared and appeased by the necessary offerings and memorials.

This fear of the *hanal* as likely to cause illness, death, the attacks of tigers or famine (for it is these apprehensions that lie behind most of the observances catalogued in the first two paragraphs of this chapter) may operate also not to the alarm of the righteous only, but as a protection to him because of its efficacy in deterring others from offences against the house. Goods stored in the *lonu* of the Hill Marias and the *wijja-lon* of the Bison-horn

---

[1] See p. 195.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

Marias are under the protection of the Departed. The old prejudice
769 against sexual intercourse in the house, still alive in the remotest
[834] Abujhmar villages, was due to a belief that it was disrespectful
to the *hanal*; it survives everywhere, therefore, to discourage
strangers from adultery with the wife in the husband's absence,
and it is believed that such adultery entails the immediate wrath
of the *hanal*. The *hanal* are the guardians of the rules of taboo,
769 of which those forbidding individuals to start agricultural operations
784 until the appropriate ceremony has been held and all the village is
able to get to work together serve to strengthen and maintain the
traditions of village co-operation. Women are the soil in which
is sown the seed of the race, and the *hanal* naturally, therefore,
punish infringement of the taboos which safeguard them, such as
the menstruation taboos, the taboo against sexual intercourse
during pregnancy, and those requiring the wife to remain secluded
for a month after delivery. The vague association of the Departed
769 and the clan-god in the Maria mind that is evidenced by the common
use of the expression *pen-hanal* has already been mentioned. As
776 the clan-god is looked upon as the first ancestor of the clan, this
614 association is not unnatural, and so the clan-god will help the
Departed to protect the household and to punish breaches of the
taboos, and, above all, of the laws of exogamy.

The future life

Even though the final offering of a menhir at the *hotohal* or
769 *uraskal* be the last thing that an individual *hanal* can demand in
his name or be aggrieved at not receiving, yet even
then he is absorbed into the general body of the
Departed, who must still be propitiated by the
various domestic observances in the *lonu* and the *wijja-lon* rooms.
775 What is the extent to which it is believed that the dead have
future life? Russell and Hiralal have again (III, p. 96) to be
criticized for the generalization that the Bastar Gonds have 'a
conception of retribution after death for the souls of evil-doers',
for which the sole foundation seems to be one of their usual picturesque but unsound statements, that the souls adjudged sinful
after death are 'hurled down into a dense forest without any
salphi trees', so that the Bastar Gond 'idea of a place of punishment
for departed sinners is, therefore, one in which no alcoholic liquor
is to be had'. This could refer only to Hill or Bison-horn Marias,
who almost alone in Bastar use *salphi* liquor. The source of the
information is not stated; but much, I think, emanated from a few
Jagdalpur Methodist converts. Nowhere in Bastar is there, so far
775 as I could ascertain, any such idea of so tangible a hell. Only
around Orcha and a few neighbouring Chhota Dongar *pargana* Hill
776 Maria villages did I find any idea of a vague Supreme Being, Ispural.

who would perhaps punish evil-doers somewhere after death; but 775
no one could say who or where Ispural was, or where the sinful [776]
would be judged and punished. It is possibly a faint echo of
missionary teaching passed on by bazaar gossip. All Marias agree
that the dead are somewhere underground; men, animals, trees,
and perhaps rivers and streams have in them *jiwa*, a principal of
life, and some say that when a man dies his *jiwa* goes to Pogho
Bhum, the sky, while that part which is cremated or buried goes
below the earth and is his *hanal*. There is a belief that the menhirs
erected at the *kotokal* or *uraskal* increase in size if the *hanal* commemorated
by it is happy. There are traces of an embryo belief
in reincarnation in the practice among Hill Marias of examining
a new-born baby to see if it has the same birth-marks as a dead
ancestor and, if so, of naming it after the ancestor if of the same
sex, or his spouse if of the other sex. Hindu ideas are beginning to [777
influence Bison-horn Marias; tombs are erected sometimes by the
side of the menhir in the *uraskal*, thatched over to protect the dead 764]
from the heat of the sun, and with a pot of cold water, replenished
from time to time, hung over the memorial to drip through a small
hole in the pot to cool him further. But, like their ideas about
the earth and the gods, the Marias' ideas about the Departed and
the after-life are very indefinite and vary from place to place; it
is safe only to go on their actual practice, and not on what some of
them will say by way of generalization or theory; the latter are
certain to be those who have had most contact with the outer world
and persons of other faiths. There is one practical way in which
old Bison-horn men show their belief in some future existence.
They often choose before death the cow or bullock to be sacrificed [764]
when their menhir is erected in the *uraskal*; and it is alleged that
if the heir thinks it better to slay some other animal, the animal
chosen by the dead man always pines to death. The graves of
Hill and Bison-horn Marias are adorned with strips of cloth, spears,
fishing-rods and other things they may need hereafter, and their
ornaments are buried often with them.

B. *Magic and Witchcraft*

We have seen before that such is the ignorance of the local 753
Hindus about the Marias that, in the words used by Glasfurd in
1862,[1] 'the simple and unsophisticated Gond tribes are believed
to be expert necromancers, and on the most intimate footing with
evil spirits'; and that the Marias have a totally undeserved
reputation as physicians, although their general idea of sickness

---

[1] Report, p. 32. [see cat. 116, p. 423]

753 is that it is caused by magic and best cured by detection of the magician, or by white counter-magic.

Black magic is still suspected as the cause of death by all 761 Marias. Bison-horn Marias consider it proved if, when they return 754 next day to the pyre where they left a corpse burning, they find part of the body unburnt. Hill Marias, through a *waddai* clan-priest [787] or his medium assistant, call on the corpse to impel its bearers to one of seven leaves that represent the possible causes of death; three of these leaves represent the magic of a fellow-villager, the magic of a *waddai* or medium, and the magic of a man at enmity with the deceased owing to a quarrel. All log-gods, whether Maria clan-gods or the various Anga-deo and Pat-deo of the Halbas and Murias, have the power of detecting witchcraft, either by impelling their bearers to the offender (the usual way among non-Marias) or through their oracles the *waddai* (or *wadde* or *madde*). In previous chapters we have seen witchcraft regarded as the cause of the blacksmith's iron ore[1] failing to produce good iron when smelted, and of the spoiling of the flowering peduncles of the *salphi* tree[2] by worms and grubs. In fact, again to quote Glasfurd[3] :—

> 'The people invariably impute their misfortunes to witchcraft. If a man's bullock dies, it is caused by witchcraft; if his crops fail, it is because the land has been bewitched by someone who is at enmity with the owner; a lingering sickness or painful disease is laid at the door of an enemy, and, in short, from the most common affairs of everyday life to the most serious, every evil that befalls a family is imputed to witchcraft.'

674 Suspected witchcraft was the cause of eight out of the eighteen murders committed between 1917 and 1923 by Bison-horn Marias 754 and of the two murders committed by Hill Marias; it was the alleged cause in the one Hill Maria and six of the eleven Bison-horn 683 Maria murder cases which I tried between 1927 and 1931 as *ex-officio* Sessions Judge. Glasfurd[3] went on to give details of the cruel treatment meted out in his day to persons suspected of witchcraft; the final test applied to a suspect, even if the preliminary test had been in his favour, was to sew him up in a sack, and duck him in waist-deep water, adjudging him guilty if in his struggles for life he managed to raise himself above the water; he was then beaten by the crowd, his head shaved, and his front teeth knocked out with a stone, to prevent him muttering his incantations. He was pelted with all kinds of filth, made to eat degrading food, and driven out of the country. But, with one exception, in none of the many murder and assault cases arising out of suspected witchcraft which occurred while I was in Bastar and of the previous cases of which I have notes was any action taken by Maria village communities

---

[1] See p. 176.
[2] See p. 164.
[3] Report, pp. 31-4.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

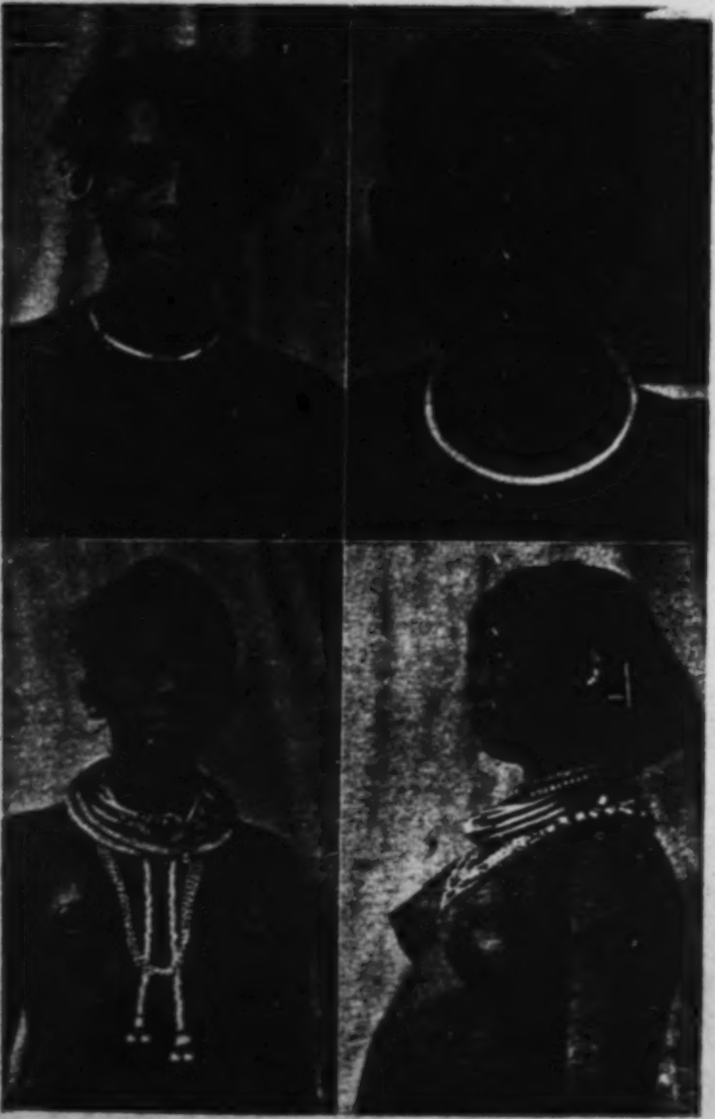
AW32 Gond AW32

Hill Maria

Bison Horn Maria

PLATE XVII

142
301
304



HILL MARIA TYPES

Above Arki Baiyya of Korawaya Gocha Pola of Chudala Tondawada

Below Jugho Buke of Itainar Guma Ewade of Goti

[Facing p. 226]

674 to molest suspects. There were cases from Muria and Bhattra
villages where the community inflicted degrading punishments only
754 somewhat less cruel than those of Glasfurd's day; but in all but one
of the Maria cases the man who believed himself wronged acted
683 entirely on his own, often after consulting the god through a *waddai*
medium, and killed or tried to kill the suspect with any weapon
that came handy. The exception was the 1916 Hill Maria murder
at Orcha, in which many villagers combined against the *pargana*
headman, who, like his father before him, was said to have been
expert in the black art, and to have used it and his position as
headman to set up a '*raj*' over the *pargana*. They combined to
seize him at night, crushed his testicles and hanged him from a
creeper.[a] Nor were women ever suspected in Maria cases, although
in three cases among Jagdalpur Murias and Bhattras women
suspects were very roughly handled. In two Bison-horn murders
it was clear that the murdered man had threatened his murderer to
bewitch him, and one of these blackmailers was himself a *waddai*.
[791] In fact, the *waddai* is generally believed by the Bison-horn Marias to
know black magic as well as white magic and divination, and is apt
to be feared accordingly.

754 It is naturally difficult to ascertain the methods believed to be used by the black magician; those who imagined they had suffered judged the fact solely from the nature of their sufferings, the word of the *waddai* consulted as to their source, and, perhaps, the known enmity of the suspect towards them, while naturally no practitioner of black magic cared to admit it or to describe his methods. Black magic is commonly referred to as *pangan*; and popular talk confirms the methods described at page 43 of the *Gazetteer*:—

> 'Whenever an enemy's life is to be taken, a bit of his cloth or hair is offered to a god with some incantations consisting of a string of names of godlings, and the victim should then pine away, unless he in turn calls in a magician. This practice is locally called *huda marna*. Another plan is for the magician to put up two bits of grass tied in the form of a cross to represent his client's enemy, and, after going through incantations, shoot at the little figure with a miniature bow and arrow made of grass. If the arrow hits the mark it is believed that the enemy will surely die, unless he has recourse to magic to avert the spell.'

The information on which this was based came from the mixed Hill and Bison-horn Maria country around Barsur, and the word 'magician' is a translation of '*waddai*'.

White Magic

755 The white magic in vogue is merely the counter-magic used by a friendly *waddai* to avert or cure illness and disease. Of actual Hill Maria methods I obtained no notes; but certain *waddais* or *leskis* have a much greater reputation than others. I gather that Hill Maria methods do not differ from those in vogue among Bison-horn Marias and Murias, in which

[a] [See cat. 116, pp. 423-424. — Analyst]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

755 even Hindu officials educated at colleges outside the State place great trust. The cause of the illness or affliction is discovered by [787] some form of divination (*hal hudatore*), generally by means of rice-grains, unless the case is serious enough to necessitate the actual presence of the log-god. The *waddai* always waits till he is possessed by his god ('the god comes upon him' or 'sits on him') to give his decision and advice. He gets rid of illness by '*jhara phukna*', blowing it away; as the sun is setting and again as it is rising he, to the accompaniment of long spells (*gumi*), pretends to [824] charm a patient's illness by brushing it with a spray of leaves of *amaltas* (*Cassia fistula*), a tree with various magic uses, down from the head or the affected part to the toes, where he blows it away. The spells consist mainly of long lists of godlings; here are three specimens acquired from Telami Dhurwa, a *waddai* of Dhurli in Dantewara tahsil :—

(*a*) '*Haranjuro, Jurjape, Panduro-Parokhanda, Kosarabir, Bhumandra, Modarabir, Kosrapitho, Lenkjugo, Pa'inpaye, Hurremara, Ligoni, Munoputati, Munj-huro, Wiroputati, Bhimaraj, Karanje-putati, Karuaraj, Rupkhanda, Jangabela, Mudara, Yerhoma, Akalharo, Mandhola, Wermar, Yekanath, Nai-taras, Mor-khanda, Netur-khanda, Gurrahom, Gōpanath, Gurja! Widse him.*'

This is just a catalogue of names said to be of godlings, but almost all of them unknown even to Telami Dhurwa, and ending with the adjuration '*Widse him*' or 'Let it go!', after saying which the *waddai* lets out a puff of breath from his mouth.

(*b*) '*Dhanbaue, Arra-barra, Thakur Deo, Unasha'i, Chhewatin, Dhobin, Chandarin, Bhandarin! Hat he bandh* (close the hands), *tōnd he bandh* (close the mouth), *kan he bandh* (close the ears)! *Guru, bandh!* (Close, oh Guru) *Gueta, Telisar! Rukh-cho rukh-jat, ban-cho ban-jat, dongur-cho dongur jat!* (literally, "Of trees, tree-kind, of forest forest-kind, of ant-hill ant-hill-kind!") *Kud-man bhad-man ilis* (You came by enmity) *Pangan man ilis* (You came by witchcraft), *par bahare udan-ja* (but get out!).'

This is a Halbi formula, starting with names of godlings, telling them to close the hands, mouth and ears of the illness, and then ordering the illnesses of tree, forests and ant-hill to get out, whether they came through enmity or witchcraft.

(*c*) '*Chinnni, Birama, Boyani, Palogo, Nangogo, Iduelo, Tulmula, Komalnago, Irpadma, Wana-Poriya, Koyandu-Hunga, Ar-Iriya, Podemala, Ar-hunga, Deo-nanda, Hurkara, Nur-Guru, Path-guru, Path-chela, Gurujan!*'

This is a meaningless jingle of words, mostly names of godlings or demons (*rau*).

000 I have not attempted here to speak of the various magico-religious ceremonies, for their magical aspect is commented on when the ceremonies themselves are described under agriculture, religion or other subjects.

C. *Omens*

We have seen how the addling of the eggs of the *kasyeq-gaita's* 787
hens may lead to the abandonment of a village site[1]; how the siting of a new Bison-horn village is affected by the finding of roots or stones when the *perma* digs a hole for the first *saja* post, and how even when these omens have allowed the hole to be dug, they have further to be confirmed by the villagers waiting till the next day to see whether two heaps of rice have been disturbed[2]; and how before the ceremonial *weta* hunts of the Bison-horn Marias begin, the *perma* consults the omens with two split pieces of a tooth-stick.[3] The Bison-horn Maria often calls in the *waddai* to examine the omens and fix auspicious days for sowing or other occasions. Omens are particularly important in connexion with betrothals and weddings, but among Bison-horn Marias only; the Hill Marias, except those living in contact with the Bison-horn Marias, seem not to worry over them, and in fact to be ignorant of the whole practice. But the Bison-horn Maria likes everything done on an auspicious day, and then only if no adverse omen is met. Russell and Hiralal (III, p. 78) write :—

> 'In Bastar an omen is taken before the wedding. The village elders meet on an auspicious day as Monday, Thursday or Friday, and after midnight they cook and eat food, and go out into the forest. They look for a small black bird called Usi, from which omens are commonly taken. When anybody sees this bird, if it cries " *Sun, Sun* " on the right hand, it is thought that the marriage will be lucky. If, however, it cries " *Chi, Chi* ", or " *Fie, Fie* ", the proposed match is held to be of evil omen, and is cancelled. The Koya Gonds of Bastar distil mahua liquor before arranging for a match. If the liquor is good, they think the marriage will be lucky, and take the liquor with them to cement the betrothal; but if it is bad they think the marriage will be unlucky, and the proposal is dropped.'

The *usi* bird is a common source of omens; the Marias of the Kutru 825
zamindari below the Abujhmar hills, who are really Hill Marias
influenced greatly by contact with Bison-horn Marias and Teluguized 787
Dorlas, when they select a new *modul wadde* as clan-priest and
social arbiter, consult the omens before confirming their selection;
they go to the forest, and if they hear an *usi* twittering on their left
as they go and on their right as they return, consider that the omens
favour their selection, but make a fresh selection if the bird twitters
on the other sides. Among Bison-horn Marias the *usi* is not the 825
usual source of marriage omens; if the party on its way to ask for
a girl's hand in marriage meets a tiger, panther, sambhur, chital, 787
jackal or snake crossing their path from left to right, it is a good 584
omen; if it crosses the path from right to left, the omen is bad, but
merely shows that the expedition has started on a bad day and must

---

[1] See p. 103.
[2] See pp. 122-3.
[3] See p. 211.

787 be postponed for a week or two, not that the proposed match should
825 be dropped.
584

D. *Beliefs about Natural Phenomena*

821 To the Hill Maria the universe is *Bhum*, the sky being *Pogho-bhum*, and the earth *Adi-bhum*; they have no name for any underworld or home of the Departed. They sometimes say that they have heard of a god named Ispural living in *Pogho-bhum*, but that they do not worship him. To Hill and Bison-horn Maria the sun (*porad*) is a Koitor, the moon (*lenj*) his woman, and the stars (*hukom* or *minkos*, Hill Maria; *uk'ka*, Bison-horn Maria) are their children; [761] falling stars (*Sohra*, Hill Maria) are their excrement; the Bison-horn Marias consider that falling stars are a portent of death. Both Hill and Bison-horn Marias call the Milky Way the Road (*daghar*, Hill Maria; *marg*, Bison-horn), but they do not know who or what uses the road and have no legend about it, though the Bhattras and Murias of Jagdalpur say that it is the road over which Bhimul drives his bullock-cart, the thunder being the rumbling of the wheels. The only constellations for which I could get Hill Maria names were *Nagar* or Plough for Orion and *Khatoli* or Cot for the Great Bear; enquiries on this point among the Bison-horn Marias drew blank. Neither had any theory about the markings on the moon's face; the Hill Marias have observed that they sometimes look like a human face. The Hill Marias call the rainbow the Earth-serpent (*Bhum-taras*, or *Bhum-taras-korta*), and say that it crawls out of a great ant-hill and throws its light across the sky as a sign of no more rain: the Bison-horn Marias call it *Bhimul-wil*, the bow of Bhimul the rain-god. The Hill Marias associate clouds (*mayyal*) with rain (*pegh*), but do not know where the rain comes from. Thunder (*gadar*) and lightning (*orr*) just happen, and do not alarm them, nor do they appear to have any special precautions to take in burying a man killed by lightning, unlike the Bison-horn Maria. But hail (*adur*) terrifies them, and all rush into their houses. They have no explanation of eclipses, which they call *garhar*, an obvious corruption of the Hindi *grahan*; but the idiomatic way of saying 'there is an eclipse' is '*garhar lopinta*', literally 'the eclipse is swallowing'; and both they and Bison-horn Marias call a man with [826 a hare-lip '*garhar-handya*', an expression which they themselves 177] cannot explain and is borrowed direct from their Hindu neighbours, who always attribute a hare-lip to an eclipse during the mother's pregnancy.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

000

PART V

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION, LAW AND CUSTOM

[p.231]
[p.232 is blank]

CHAPTER XIII

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION; THE PHRATRIES AND CLANS

114 THE investigations that have resulted in the materials for this book have had perforce to be made piecemeal in the intervals of a busy administrative task. Here the professional ethnologist who is able to make a prolonged stay among the subjects of his studies has a profound advantage over the administrator; and in no direction is this advantage more pronounced than in tracing the ramifications of a system of social organization. Even where the genealogical method of enquiry can be profitably employed it is useless for this wide purpose, unless the collection of pedigrees and of information on laws and customs based upon them can be spread over as wide a field as possible. Apart from the lack of leisure from which an official administering a State so large and with such a tradition of personal rule as Bastar must suffer, there is a further difficulty [153] about genealogical enquiries, namely the poor memories of the Marias as to their ancestors, sometimes even as to their own parents and uncles. It is very seldom that anyone can remember the names of ancestors earlier than his grandparents; many cannot even remember their grandmother's name, much less her clan, unless the family has regularly followed the tradition of cross-cousin marriage. When, as among the Hill Marias, there is so little individual property to pass by inheritance, land being the property of the clan, cattle being scarce, and the contents of the houses being either food or not made of durable materials, some of which have to be buried with their owner or destroyed at his death, the genealogical method may not lead the enquirer very far. Very old men and women are, moreover, not common. The only pedigree covering more than three generations that I was able to collect is printed in Appendix II after the lists of clans. Two circumstances favoured it. There were two very old but intelligent men, Usendi Baiyya and Usendi Dangi, living when the pedigree was first taken in 1930; their nephew Usendi Moda, a man of unusual intelligence, was then about fifty, and all three had a good memory of the clans and villages with which the family had intermarried for three generations; even then Baiyya and Dangi could not remember their paternal grandmother's name or the clan and village from which

114 she came. The second circumstance was the fact that, to some extent, I could spur their memories from the record of a 1916 Sessions case in which Moda and two other members of the family had been sentenced to imprisonment for life for the murder of a fourth member, Usendi Bhosa. The family was, moreover, one of considerable social importance. [622] It has the hereditary right of providing the secular headman of both the village of Orcha and the large Chhota Dongar *pargana*, while the Usendi clan is one of the strongest in the Abujhmar hills, and the Koqsar festivals of its god Wikir Hunga attract people from far and wide. In most families it is impossible to get beyond the paternal grandfather, if indeed beyond the father and mother; but though the names are forgotten, obligations are not; and many, if not all, Marias remember the clans and families with which they have cross-cousin marriage alliances. [582] Of 105 Hill Maria marriages investigated, fifty-seven were marriages between cross-cousins; it is not so easy to check the remaining 46 per cent. in which the marriage marked the start of new affinities, at least as between the two contracting families, if not as between the clans.

On the other hand, a man touring as the administrative head of the State has the advantage of always having many Marias from different clans and villages assembling at his camps, and so of ascertaining their matrimonial alliances and testing practically any clan lists which he may have made or obtained elsewhere. But here a further difficulty crops up. 114 618 Communications among the Hill Marias are very bad, and it by no means follows that an Usendi living, let us say, on the southern edge of the Chhota Dongar *pargana* has the same views on the clans from which it is permissible to seek a bride as an Usendi in the Chanda part of the Abujhmar hills or in the northernmost Maria *pargana* of the Antagarh tahsil. There is always a tendency to limit clan jurisdiction to the administrative division; though investigation will reveal much intermarriage between one *pargana* and the next, even though one should be in one tahsil and the other in another, in a zamindari or even in British territory, yet the investigator will be assured that 'we do not take wives from that clan or village because it is not in our *pargana*' or 'our raj'; and it has already been seen that when members of a clan migrate from their clan-area to colonize lands deserted by other clans outside the *pargana* they no longer consider themselves under any obligation to attend their original clan-god's festivals.

000 This much has been said by way of introduction, and of apology if, as I fear, this chapter is the least satisfactory and the least final in its conclusions.

The only writers who seem to have touched on the social organization of the Bastar Marias before are Russell and Hiralal, who said (III, pp. 64-6) :—A 114 614

Russell and Hiralal, on the social organization of the Bastar Marias

> 'The Gond rules of exogamy appear to preserve traces of the system found in Australia, by which the whole tribe is split into two or four main divisions, and every man in one or two of them must marry a woman in the other one or two. . . .

'Among the Gonds, however, the subdivision into small exogamous sects has been also carried out, and the class system, if the surmise that it once existed be correct, remains only in the form of a survival, prohibiting marriage between agnates, like an ordinary sept. In one part of Bastar all the septs of the Maria Gonds are divided into two great classes. There are ninety septs in A Class and sixty-nine in B Class, though the list may be incomplete. All the septs in A Class say that they are Bhaiband or Dadabhai to each other, that is in the relation of brothers, or cousins being the sons of brothers. No man of Class A can marry a woman of any sept in Class A. The septs of Class A stand in the relation of Mamabhai or Akomama to those of Class B. Mamabhai means a maternal uncle's son, and Akomama apparently signifies having the same maternal grandfather. Any man of a sept in Class A can marry any woman of a sept in Class B. It will thus be seen that the smaller septs seem to serve no purpose for regulating marriage, and are no more than family names. The tribe might just as well be divided into two great exogamous clans only. Marriage is prohibited between persons related only through males; but according to the exogamous arrangement there is no other prohibition, and a man could marry any maternal relative. Separate rules, however, prohibit his marriage with certain female relatives, and these will be given subsequently (ibid., p. 72). It is possible that the small septs may serve some purpose which has not been elicited, though the inquiry made by Rai Bahadur Panda Baijnath[1] was most careful and painstaking.

'In another part of Bastar there were found to be five classes, and each class had a small number of septs in it. The people who supplied this information could not give the names of many septs. Thus Class A had six septs,[2] Class B five, Classes C and D one each, Class E four, and Class F two. A man could not marry a woman of any sept belonging to his own class. 114 615

'The Maria Gonds of Bastar have a few large exogamous septs or clans named in Hindi after animals, and each of these clans contains several subsepts with Gondi names. Thus the *Bakaravans* or Goat race contains the Garde, Kunjami, Karrami and Vadde septs. The *Kachhimvans* or Tortoise race has the Netami, Kawachi, Usendi and Tekami septs. The *Nagvans* or Cobra race includes the Maravi, Potari, Karanga, Nurethi, Dhurwa and others. Other exogamous races are the Sodi (or tiger), Behainsa (buffalo), Netam (dog in Gondi), Chamchidai (bat) and one or two more. In this case the exogamous clans with Hindi names would appear to be a late division, and have perhaps been adopted because the meaning of the old Gondi names had been forgotten, or the septs were too numerous to be remembered.'

As will be seen in this chapter, the part of Bastar where five 'classes' were found was presumably the Bison-horn country and its cultural extension, the Dorla country, where there are definitely five phratries each containing varying numbers of clans. The tract in which, according to Rai Bahadur Panda Baijnath's enquiry, the 114 618

---

[1] Diwan of Bastar for many years.

[2] Six classes, A to F, are given, though the text speaks of five, the actual number among both Bison-horn Marias and Dorlas. But so few 'septs' are mentioned, nineteen as compared to the fifty in my list of phratries, that the enquiry must have been incomplete.

A [See cat. 116, p. 426. —Analyst]

114 Marias were divided into two moieties containing ninety and
sixty-nine 'septs' (for which this book uses the term 'clans') can
618 only have been the country of the Hill Marias.

The clan organization of the Hill Marias

Unfortunately the records of the Rai Bahadur's enquiry are not forthcoming. But he appears never to have entered the Abujhmar hills, and his enquiries were probably based on questions put to Hill Marias at camps to which they came to see him in the plains. The list of hill clans in the appendix shows only fifty clans. My enquiries so far as possible covered even those Hill Maria *parganas* which I did not visit, and though my list is, no doubt, incomplete, the great difference between his 159 and my 50 clans must mean that he included many areas which are not Hill Maria areas, probably all Kutru zamindari, and all Antagarh tahsil.

618 As we have seen, the clans are not merely little more than surnames; quite apart from questions of exogamy, they are, in the Abujhmar hills, practically political units, each, at least of the flourishing clans, with its own clan-area; and each clan had a *panchayat* system for dealing with everyday offences. Clans may feel themselves closer to some clans in kindred or affinity, as the case may be, than to others; but on the whole it is the social solidarity of the clan and its members, its '*bhumkal*' as the Marias say, that keeps the Hill Marias together. Had it not been for the strong feeling of the clan for its own *bhum* (earth) the mistaken and oppressive land revenue system in vogue till recently and the gross mismanagement of at least the Bastar zamindaris would have resulted in wholesale migration to Chanda District. As it was, many went, but generally a nucleus of the clans remained, and now that things are better in Bastar many of the emigrants are returning.

I started my enquiries strongly influenced by the passage
618 quoted from Russell and Hiralal, and expecting that the hill clans
616 would fall naturally into two moieties. So for long they did.
I began with the great Usendi clan of Orcha and the Chhota Dongar hill *pargana*. So far as that *pargana* is concerned, the clans in it do fall into two moieties, the Usendi clan having six clans related to it as *dadabhai* (brother-clan) and fourteen as *akomama* (wife-clan); not only did each of the clans concerned agree that it stood in the relation shown to the Usendi clan, but their statements were confirmed by the actual marriages examined. But the first major difficulty arose in the adjacent Barsur Mar and Mangnar *pargana*. There is no doubt about the Usendi freely intermarrying with the important Gume clan which practically monopolizes Barsur Mar; the pedigree in the appendix, for example, shows four such marriages

618
616

in cross-cousin relation. It is equally certain that the great Jugho clan of Adeq and other Chhota Dongar villages as well as of Itulnar in Bhairamgarh Mar regularly intermarries with and is *akomama* to the Usendi clan. If there were two moieties, all clans from which an Usendi could take a wife would have to be in the moiety other than that containing the Usendi clan; that is to say the Gumelor and the Jughalor would have to be in the same moiety and so would be *dadabhai* to each other and unable to intermarry. But actually they are *akomama* to each other and do intermarry quite often. Take again the important Jate clan of Mornar in Mangnar *pargana*, and its closely connected *dadabhai* clans the Tokalor and Hukur of Erpanar. They are *dadabhai* to the Usendi. On the two-moiety theory, therefore, they would be in the same moiety as the Usendi clan, and so would be any clan from which the Gumelor, with whom the Usendi, Jaterom, Tokalor and Hukur intermarry, might take a wife. The Gumelor often take wives from the Marvi clan of Tokhtoli and three other villages in Mangnar *pargana*. The Jaterom, Tokalor and Hukur should, therefore, be in the same moiety as that clan and debarred from taking wives from it; actually they consider themselves 'close *akomama*' relatives of the Marvi clan, and intermarriage is frequent. As, therefore, on the two-moiety theory Marvis must be in the opposite moiety to the Gumelor, they ought to be in the same moiety as the Usendi clan with whom the Gumelor intermarry; but, e.g., Marvi Bital, the headman of Tokhtoli, married his cross-cousin Usendi Puse of Juwara, continuing a chain of such marriages between the two families. The Jaterom-Tokalor-Hukur group of clans takes wives from Marvis and Gumelor, the Marvis from the Gumelor and the Jaterom-Tokalor-Hukur group, and the Gumelor from the Jaterom-Tokalor-Hukur group and the Marvis. Again, the Dhurwa clan is a close *dadabhai* of the Jughalor, and in practice (vide the pedigree) intermarries with the Usendi. It also intermarries with the Gumelor, who, as we have seen, themselves intermarry with the Usendi. This is another triangular example that cannot be fitted into the two-sided moiety theory. Examples can be found also in the north of the hills. The Farsal, Bardal and Gotal clans are very definitely *dadabhai* both to themselves and to the neighbouring Muria clans the Karangalor and Dughalor; the three of them marry mostly Jughalor girls, but also Usendi and Wadder girls, and the Usendi of the Kiringal and Dugal *pargana* are *akomama* to the Karangalor and Dughalor. On the two-moiety theory, therefore, the Usendi and Jughalor ought to be in the same moiety and, therefore, would not be allowed to intermarry. But actually they do, very frequently.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32

Hill Maria

Bison Horn Maria

[616] 615 618 The theory of two moieties therefore completely breaks down, and it is obvious that we are confronted by something approaching phratries. The Bison-horn Marias call their groups *kutmam* or *tarr* and their clans *katta*; but the Hill Marias know neither of the two former words, and, though some towards the south of the hills understand *katta*, they use the word *pari* that is in vogue for this purpose among all the Central Provinces Gonds. It is possible that they have some word for groups of clans, but I was unsuccessful in trying to get at it. They have some conception, however, of groups. The Usendi, Wadder, Katlami and Jaterom consider themselves brothers; Wikir Hunga, the god of the Usendis and Wadder, is a younger brother of Pat Raja, god of the Jaterom, and Pandu Hunga, god of the Katlamis, is the next brother after Wikir Hunga and has a Jate *waddai*; the Deda clan of Kurmer may also belong to the group, as its god Nule Harma is the youngest brother of Pat Raja. To the group would also belong the smaller clans of the Chhota Dongar *pargana* that are *dadabhai* to the Usendi, the Korami, Dodi, Deda and Parsal. Similarly the Jugho (*alias* Karme) clan says that the Dhurwa clan is its elder and the Dolwar clan its younger brother; their marriages are all consistent with membership of the same group, which possibly also includes the other Chhota Dongar clans of the list not mentioned above as *dadabhai* to the Usendi group, and the Yete clan of Kutru; all these are definitely *dadabhai* to the Jughalor. The Bardal, Farsal, Gotal, Nughoti, Tapa and Hichami clans of the north appear to be a group, to which would be added the Dughalor and Karangalor had they not become Murias and decided to discontinue the give and take of daughters in marriage with the Hill Marias. Of the grouping of the Kutru clans it is difficult to speak; but judging from marriages the Parllo, Jata, Kohka and Ark clans are a group of *dadabhai*, and *akomama* to another group consisting of the Boter, Wachami, Mohanda, Oyami, Mohke, and Pungati. The former group appears to be *dadabhai* to the Usendi group, and to be differentiated from it only by the fact that its members live in the Kutru zamindari, while the Usendi group is practically confined to the Antagarh tahsil. In Mangnar there is definitely a Jaterom-Tokalor-Hukur group, while the Marvi may belong to the same group as the Marvi phratry of the Bison-horn Marias and may include the small Alami and Nonde clans of Mangnar. The Gumelor of Barsur Mar seem to be in a group of their own so far as most of the Hill clans are concerned. The chief clans ungrouped in this tentative grouping are the Padal of Padalibhum and the Jati of Jatwara; both possibly come into the great Jughalor group.

615
618

It should be clear from what has been said that these groups or phratries are not proved, but are a hypothesis that does explain observed facts, which cannot possibly be squared with the theory of two moieties. That theory is the less likely when it is remembered that amongst all the Gonds of the Central Provinces it is usual to find phratries, whether the simple totem-phratries of the Bison-horn Marias of Bastar or the three-god, four-god, five-god, six-god and seven-god phratries of the Chanda, Nagpur and Chhindwara districts. Russell and Hiralal have already been quoted as saying that there are similar totem phratries among the Murias. But one must not necessarily expect to find the same number (five) of phratries among the Hill Marias; they perhaps are not conscious of having any phratries at all, and the groups are only the result of proximity and convenience, tempered by the accidents of the political geography of the hill country. There are no signs at all of totems for these suppositious groups, like those shown in the list of Bison-horn clans, and existing among the Murias; the Usendi will not eat or keep goats, and the Parllo, though they tend goats for Telis, will not eat them or drink their milk. The Kohkalor will not touch or fell the marking-nut tree (*kohka-marra ; Semecarpus anacardium*) or its fruits. The Yete are called after the crab (*yete*), but they eat crabs. The Neghal are called after the panther (*neghal*), but the reason seems to be that when they founded their village a panther was killed at the entrance to it, the panther now commemorated by three stones (see page 154). The Alami have the *alam* or chameleon as totem, and salaam gravely any chameleon they may meet. But the reverence paid by the Jaterom to the brooms of *jate* grass used to sweep their god's shrine and by the Hukur to the ladle that they use to dole out the sacrificial rice cooked at the same shrine are acts akin to the annual worship paid by all Hindu artisans to the tools of their craft. The other things mentioned in the totem column in the list of hill clans in the appendix are not totems, but explanations of the origins of the names of the clans concerned. It is thus clear that traces of totemism among the Hill Marias are very slight, and affect individual clans, not groups. There is no connexion at all between totemism and the taboos, nor does it figure in the cult of the clan-god.

It was suggested on page 205 that the five major clans from which the five Bison-horn phratries take their names might have originated from the migration of strong bodies of each of those clans from the Abujhmar hills, in the same way that even now bodies of clans like the Jughalor and the Gumelor are beginning to occupy deserted lands of forgotten or dwindling clans in Bhairamgarh Mar, and that each of these five major clans split up into smaller clans, 615 618 each new clan, however, retaining to some extent its membership of the original clan, the name of which became the generic name for it and its daughter-clans. The process can be seen at work in the hills; the Tokalor and Hukur have clearly split off from the Jaterom, while the Usendi group must at some time have split away from the Jaterom, as their clan-gods are the younger brothers of the Jaterom god Pat Raja, and the Katlami god Pandu Hunga, the eldest of these younger brothers, is served by a Jate *waddai* (clan-priest). It does look as though there may have been an original two-moiety system, which has expanded into a group system merely because as colonization proceeded strict adherence to the rule of taking a wife from the other moiety proved impossible owing to distances and bad communications. For the emigrant clans who colonized the Bison-horn country, which could support a far larger population than the hills, it would be particularly necessary to allow a wider range of choice than possible under two-moiety exogamy. This is secured if a man in phratry A can take a wife from phratry B, C, D or E.

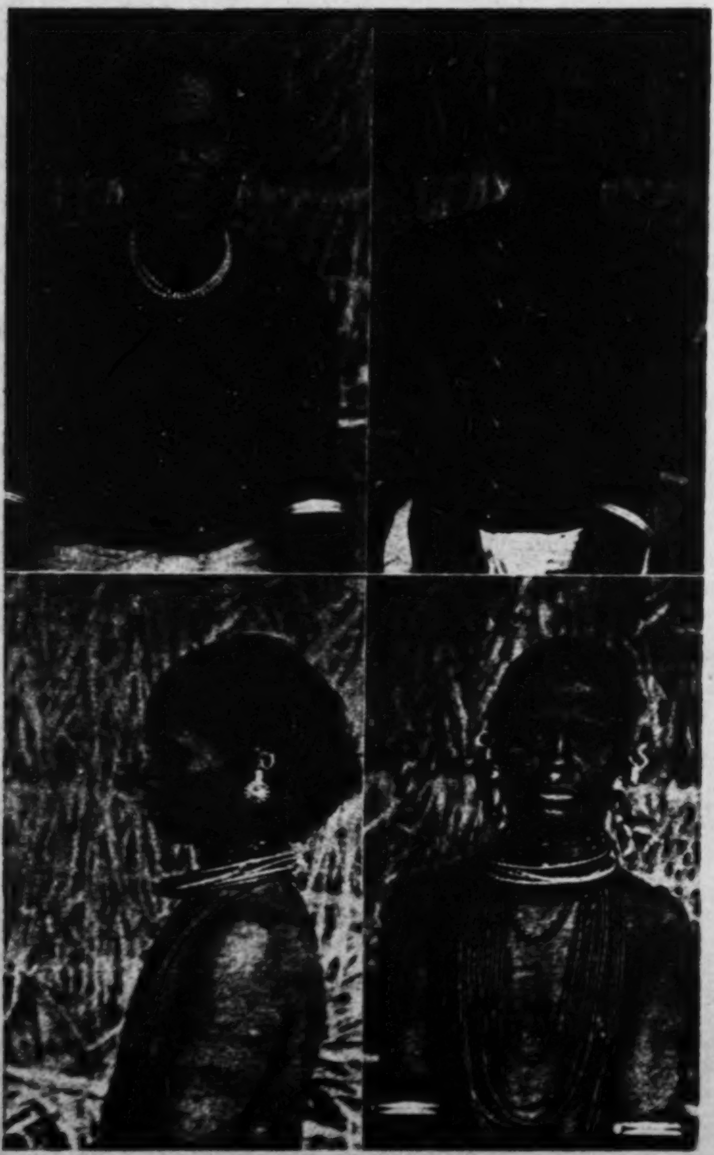
Bison-horn phratries and clans

So we have the phatry and clan organization of the Bison-horn Marias. The list in Appendix II shows nine clans in the Marvi phratry, ten in the Kuhrami, three in the Sodi, twenty-one in the Markami and eight in the Kawasi, fifty-one altogether, as compared with the nineteen of Russell and Hiralal. The list mentions six other clans whose phratry I did not ascertain. Like the Muria phratries mentioned by Russell and Hiralal, these phratries are often described as the *bans*, a Hindi word for race, of their totems; the Marvi phratry in most of the Bison-horn country is the *Bakrabans* or Goat race, and in Sukma and the south the *Nagvans* or Cobra race; the Kuhrami phratry is the *Kadiaribans* or Cuckoo race; the Sodi phratry is the *Baghbans* or Tiger race; and both the Markami and the Kawasi phratries are *Kachhimvans* or Tortoise races. Almost exactly the same phratries with the same subordinate clans are found among the Dorla Koitor of the south; but they have other names for the phratries, called after the *yelopi* or *velpu* god of the phratry, only one of whom, Perambhoi, after whom the phratry corresponding to the Bison-horn Kuhrami or Cuckoo race is called, is even known to the Bison-horn Marias.

There are certain peculiarities. Although clans belong to a phratry with a certain totem, they sometimes have either no totem or a totem of their own, which may be the same as the totem of one of the other phratries, or one peculiar to itself. The Hemla clan of the Marvi or Goat phratry has the tortoise as totem; the Kalmu clan of the Markami Tortoise race has the goat as totem; and the

PLATE XVIII

142
291
301
304
302



BISON-HORN MARIA TYPES

Above Markami Harma of Burgum   Markami Joga, headman of Burgum
Below Mase, wife of Markami Muka of Kakadi

[facing p. 240]

615 618 Poriami clan of the Kuhrami or Cuckoo phratry has the buffalo, which has supplanted the tiger as the totem of the Sodi or Tiger phratry, since tigers so far forgot themselves as to kill and eat some men of the phratry. In the Cuckoo phratry two clans, the Kartami and the Kuhrami (which gives its name to the phratry), have the *karot* or hornbill as totem, while the Kunjami clan has the *kunje* or screech-owl. In all these cases it is the clan totem that matters, not the phratry totem; the Hemla clan will kill goat or cobra, the Kartami and Kuhrami the cuckoo, and the Kalmu the goat. Some clans have no totem of their own, but have no scruples about touching, killing or eating the totem of their phratry; examples are the Tamo clan in the Goat phratry, the Oika clan in the Tiger or Buffalo phratry, and the Birya or Big Markami, the Gonche, the Miriyami, the Nupo and the Tati clans in the Markami Tortoise race. Two conclusions follow. The first is that certain clans in the phratry, those with different totems, probably did not split off from the parent clan of the phratry, but were independent clans grouped into the phratry at a later stage, probably owing to contiguity. The second thing is that the association of the totemic animal or plant with phratries and clans is so far from universal and plays so small a part in the life of the whole tribe that it is either something new, borrowed from another culture, but not really assimilated, or else a relic of something that has decayed with antiquity. It is remarkable that the Birya or Big Markami clan should not have any scruples about the tortoise, the totem of the Markami or Tortoise phratry, while the Chudala or Small Markami clan is very particular about it. Yet it is only of the tortoise totem that there is any
/ [773] legend; there is said long ago to have been a great flood, which the brothers Markam and Kawasi were unable to cross until a tortoise came and took them on its back.[1] Some, however, do go
[784] out of their way to avoid touching or harming their totem, particularly the Kawasi Tortoise phratry; blindness is the punishment which eating the totem is said to involve. I was told by a Kawasi

---

[1] This legend of the origin of the tortoise totem is one of the very few traces (the only trace that I have met) among Bastar Marias of the Ramcharna legend of the origin of the Gonds. In the version of this given in Trench's *Gondi Grammar*, Vol. II, all the ancestors of the Gonds were stopped on their way to worship the Great God by a great flood, 'whereupon in haste they plunged into the river, and one caught hold of a Tendu log, another a Sirras, another a palm tree, another a teak tree, another an iguana, another a tiger, thus each seizing something or other, they forded the river. Having crossed the river, they assembled near a Saj tree, and ate the new rice that ripens in hollows, and drank, and asked each other, "What did you catch hold of when you crossed?" They said, "I for my part seized a palm tree and forded on it, I a teak tree, and I a tiger." Addi-rawan-pariol says, "Then your *pari* will be the Palm tree, yours the Teak, and yours the Tiger." Thus *paris* were found for all of them

I was told by a Kawasi

615 informant that a bride coming from a clan with a different totem to a Kawasi household was made to eat her father's totem as a sign
618 of abandoning that totem's race or clan; but I could never verify this. There is a definite ceremony for transferring a re-marrying
[587] widow from her first to her second husband's clan; but this has nothing to do with the totem.

There is nothing to prevent a man in the Markami Tortoise phratry taking a wife from the Kawasi Tortoise phratry. In fact, if totems were of real significance, it is hard to see why there should be these two mutually exogamous Tortoise phratries. Nor is there anything to bar them intermarrying with the Hemla Tortoise clan in the Goat phratry; the same applies to the Goat and Buffalo phratries and the Goat and Buffalo clans in other phratries.

Another point that suggests that the phratry has arisen as a convenience for enlarging the matrimonial field is that each village is regarded as the *bhum* (earth or soil) of the individual Bison-horn clan that first settled it, not of the phratry. To give a few examples, Massenar is the *bhum* of the Atrami clan, Lendra and Singwaram of the Barse clan, Mandimarka of the Dodi clan, Durandarbha and Gumadasaka of the Hemla clan, Dugheli and Pharaspal of the Kalmu clan, Birya Gudra, Etipal and Bhusaras of the Kartami clan, Berma and Karrigudem of the Kunjami clan, Kondasaoli, Komarguda, Kodmair, Ursangal, Tetam and Koriras of the Birya Marvi, Chudala Gudra, Tarlaguda and Banjepalli of the Chudala Marvi, Palnar, Phulpan and Singaram of the Vetti. Each clan thus has villages that are far apart; there is no contiguity of all the villages that are the *bhum* of one clan, and therefore no compact clan-area as in the Abujhmar hills. Nor is there any phratry area; five contiguous villages may easily be the *bhum* of five clans each belonging to a different phratry. Even in the villages that are the *bhum* of one clan it is quite possible that the *perma* may be the only member of the clan in the village, and in every village there are settlements of all the clans with which the founder clan has intermarried, each clan that is big enough being allotted a separate quarter in the village for its houses, and clans of which there are only one or two representatives perhaps sharing a quarter with other clans of their phratry. Only a *perma* of the founder clan can mediate between the villagers and the Earth and Village Mother; and if that clan has retained its own clan-god, little heed is paid to the clan-god of the phratry or the parent-clan of the phratry. At the sacrifices to the Departed and the subsequent sacrificial meal at first-fruits ceremonies only the householder's *bhumkal* or fellow-clansmen may be present, not members of other clans in his phratry even. The division of the large Marvi, Markami and Sodi clans into big and small clans of the same name is an old one, and, as the examples above show, the big and small clans have different villages as their *bhum*; the reality of their separation is further shown by such differences of custom as the Big Marvi clan making flat table-stones or *danya-kal* for their dead instead of the usual menhirs or *urakal* which the Small Marvi and all other clans except the Kuhrami erect for their dead, and as the different outlook of the Big and Small Markami to the tortoise totem of the Markami phratry. 615 618

Traditional origins of clan names

The chapter may be closed with examples of the traditional origins of certain Hill and Bison-horn Maria clan names, into which nothing totemic appears to intrude. 618

Gumelor	When their first village was founded the sky had become *gume* or overcast with clouds.
Gecha	The founder of the clan was a laggard or stay-behind (*gecha*).
Dolwar	Though Hill Marias, they make *dol* drums like the Bison-horn Marias.
Dhurwa	They walked in front of the clan-god like *dhurwas* preceding the Raja of Bastar in a procession.
Akhal	'Leafy': the founder was a great tree-climber.
Katlami	The 'borrow-pit' clan, diggers of borrow-pits for tank embankments.
Karma	The 'sunset' clan, because the founder was born at sunset (an alternative name for the Jughalor).
Kuhrami	The 'people of the mist' (*kuhra*), because on cold weather mornings they walk ahead of others to disperse the mist and heavy dew.

The examples are similar to those given by Russell and Hiralal (III, pp. 68-70) for the Gond clans of Betul District.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

CHAPTER XIV

MARRIAGE

582-618 WHATEVER the origin of the clans and phratries, they serve as a means of regulating the marriages of Hill and Bison-horn Marias; in the case of the latter, among whom the clan is no longer a territorial as well as a social unit, one might say that the primary function of the clan and phratry organization is the regulation of marriage. A child is born into the clan of its father, and, if a son, must remain in that clan all its life; but, if a daughter, passes on marriage to the clan of the husband, and on re-marriage from his clan to that of the second husband. A son must not take a wife, or a daughter a husband, from the father's clan or from any clan that is brother-clan or *dadabhai* to it: he must marry a wife from, and she must marry into, some clan that is a wife-clan or *akomama* of their father's clan. It has been seen that the phratry system of the Bison-horn Marias gives them a wider field of selection of wives and husbands than the more inchoate group system of Hill Maria clans. A widow, however, must not marry as second husband a man whose clan is brother to her father's clan, even though through being in a phratry other than that of her first husband's clan the second husband's clan would be wife-clan to the first husband's. In a word, throughout a woman's life all her marriages are regulated by the clan into which she was born.

Exogamy

601 114 Appendix III gives a list of the Hill Maria terms of relationship so far as I could ascertain them; they were collected in Orcha and adjacent villages by the genealogical method, and verified in other parts of the Abujhmar hills. They were collected as terms of reference, though some are used also as terms of address, e.g. *mama, dada, kaka*. I was unable in the time at my disposal to make a similar collection of the Bison-horn Maria terms; but so far as my observation went their terms are the same but for dialectical differences. This applies also, it may be added, in a considerable degree to the terms used by the Gonds of the Nagpur District, and, to judge from the incomplete list given in Trench's *Grammar*, Volume I, to those of the Betul Gonds. [551] It may be added that when a son has been born to him, a Hill or Bison-horn Maria is often addressed by his family and neighbours as the father of his son, e.g. '*Rajin-tappe*', meaning 'Father of Raje'.

601 *Dadabhai*, the word used to designate kindred or brother-clans, is a combination of *dada*, the Gondi term for an elder brother, and

bhai, the Hindi word for all brothers; in both cases, of course, 601 'brother' is not used in our narrow sense, but includes paternal cousins of the same generation in any degree. The son of any father related to me as my *pepi* or father's elder brother counts as my *dada* or elder brother, and the son of any father related to me as my *kaka* or father's younger brother counts as my *tamo* or younger brother. *Akomama*, the word used to designate affine or wife-clans, is a combination of *ako* and *mama*; the Hill Marias call their mother's father *ako*, and a man uses the same term for both his daughter's son and his daughter's daughter, who, of course, would be his affines and not his kindred; a Hill Maria man applies the term *mama* not only in the ordinary Hindi way to his mother's brother (or parallel cousin), but also to his wife's father and to her brother's son.

In theory, therefore, marriage is permissible between a man 582 and any woman of any wife-clan, with, however, certain definite exceptions. The chief of these is the strict rule prohibiting a man 607 marrying his wife's elder sister, which is stressed at Bison-horn marriages by the bridegroom putting the ring which he gives her in a cloth which she holds out, and not on her finger, as he does with the ring he gives to his wife's younger sister, and by the elder sister when she receives the ring in her cloth telling the bridegroom that thenceforth he must neither touch her nor utter her name. A man may not marry his mother-in-law or her co-widow or any woman related to them as a 'sister',[1] or any of his aunts[1] or nieces,[1] even though of an *akomama* or wife-clan. In theory, there is nothing to prevent him marrying his daughter's daughter, a young widow of his father's father, his father's mother's sister or his mother's father's sister; in practice, however, disparity of age usually rules out such unions, and in all the villages in which I have investigated Hill and Bison-horn Maria marriages I have never come across an actual example of any of them; I found one case, however, in which a man had married his elder brother's daughter's daughter. Lastly, just as a man may not touch or marry his wife's elder sister, so a widow may not marry her dead husband's [587] elder brother, though she can, and frequently does, marry his younger brother.

Offences against the rules of exogamy occur, but very rarely 684 among the Hill Marias, and only slightly less rarely among the Bison-horn. A youth of the Gume hill clan at Toinar was accused in 1929 of 835

---

[1] Using 'aunt' and 'niece' like 'brother' in the extended sense, to cover not only actual aunts and nieces, but also female cousins once removed. 'Sister' similarly includes paternal female cousins of the same generation in any degree.

684
635

illicit intercourse with a young widow who had been born a Gume, and had a child by her dead husband. This was regarded as incest. The youth was put to the ordeal of plunging his hand into boiling cow-dung and water, and as he was very severely scalded the couple were adjudged guilty. The youth was ultimately received back into the community after a penal feast to the clan, and has since married legitimately; but the widow and her child were driven out of the *pargana*, and in 1934 were said to be living in a village some forty miles away near the Chanda border of Kutru. This was the only definite example of a breach of the rules of exogamy among Hill Marias that came to my notice. In Padalbhum and Tapalibhum *parganas*, however, there were said to have been one or two cases within memory in which both the man and the woman had been received back into the clan after recovery of heavy penalties from them and their parents and after they had sworn to separate and never repeat the offence. It was stated that a child born of such an incestuous union would never be admitted to social or religious ceremonies, or given a wife. Among the Bison-horn Marias connexions between men and women of the same clan appear never to occur, but cases are by no means unknown of affairs between men and women of the same phratry, and it was stated that these are regularized by a visit to the clan-god of the man, with the child, if any, of the union, and by the payment of a heavy fine. I had to try the son of a *waddai* clan-priest who had killed his father because the latter, after first seducing the wife of the accused's younger brother, had raped the accused's wife and driven both his sons out of the house. In this case the two women were not of the same phratry as their father-in-law, and he could have married them had they not been married to his sons. Tribal feeling against the dead man was extremely bitter, and, though it was recognized that the son was justified in slaying his father, this alone was not sufficient to purify the two sons from the guilt of their father's incest; a heavy fine was imposed on them, to collect which took them three years, though in the meantime the elder son was allowed to succeed his father as clan-priest and to officiate as such, and both were admitted to the *pandum* and other feasts. In two other murder cases there was a remarkable hostility displayed by witnesses towards husbands, in one case the accused and in the other the brother of the murdered man, whose wives were suspected of incestuous love affairs; but it was not possible to ascertain exactly what had happened. The general idea seems to be that such incest will bring upon the community the special wrath of the clan-god and the Departed, in the form of visitations of man-eating or cattle-lifting tigers, or famine or pestilence.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

Cross-cousin marriage

It has already been said (page 234) that a very high proportion 582 of marriages are cross-cousin marriages, and that such unions formed 54 per cent. of the Hill Maria marriages into which I enquired. The proportion is not much less among the Bison-horn Marias. Such marriages are considered the most seemly, both because the family which has given a daughter to another family in marriage in one generation should have this obligation repaid by getting her daughter back as a wife for a son of the next generation, and because such family arrangements obviate the necessity of paying the much heavier bride-price required for getting a bride from a new and unrelated family. Such marriages are known as *gudapal* or 'tribe-milk' marriages. The commonest form is marriage between a daughter and her mother's brother's son (brother being again used in the extended sense). But it has also been extended to cover marriages between a girl and her father's sister's son and a son and his mother's brother's daughter, which merely mean the borrowing of a wife from the same family for two successive generations; in such cases the predominant consideration, apart from the wishes of the bridegroom and bride, is the smaller bride-price which will be demanded by relations so close in affinity. Moreover, it is a reflection on parents if, when a girl is mature, no marriage is arranged [595] for her and no one asks for her; in such cases it is a recognized right of the parents to ask either the mother's brother's son or the father's sister's son to carry her off and make her his wife, even though he be already married to some other woman. Similarly a man, especially among the Bison-horn Marias, often acquires as second and third co-wives the younger sisters of his first wife. When a Bison-horn Maria girl marries a man other than her mother's brother's son, the latter, unless he has forfeited his prescriptive right to her by previously marrying another girl, is entitled to compensation from her husband, usually Rs. 5. But the Hill Marias do not observe this. For to them the free choice of the youth and girl is far more important, and when a girl is never compelled to marry against her will, it obviously is unnecessary to compensate anyone if she refuses to marry him. In a similar way Bison-horn Marias consider that a younger brother has a prescriptive right to an elder brother's widow, and he therefore gets Rs. 5 compensation if any other man marries her.

No value is set on pre-marital chastity, and it is doubtful 836 whether any girl preserves her virginity until her marriage. The typical attitude was thus expressed by Usendi Moda, the headman of Orcha, already mentioned as one of the men sentenced for the 1926 Orcha murder, and whose family pedigree is given in Appendix

836 II. His sister married Gecha Harma of Udala Tondawada, and at the wedding he met Harma's sister Gecha Kowe, and danced with her. They liked each other, and met at other weddings and at koqsar dances, and had sexual intercourse two or three times, which Moda said was necessary in order to ascertain that they were both physically capable. Everyone saw that they were in love, and their wedding followed as soon as the necessary betrothal ceremonies
588 could be completed. But if pre-marital intercourse results in
848 pregnancy, there can be no formal marriage, which the Hill Marias call *marmi* and the Bison-horn *pendul*; the girl states the name of the man responsible, and goes to live in his house without any ceremony, the union being described as *otter* ('taken away'). A child born to a girl without even *otter* would be considered as belonging to the clan of the man whom the mother names as the father; and this putative father would be expected to take the mother and child to his house, the union being known to the Hill Marias as *ahene-hattu* ('thus-went'). No stigma attaches to such unions, and the children have exactly the same position and rights as the children of a formal marriage.

Hill Maria regular betrothal and marriage

584 Hill Maria parents do not try to interfere in their children's choice of wives and husbands. When a youth and his girl know their minds, each tells his or her parents. Then the youth's parents, with the elders of the village, go, without the youth, with about a rupee's worth of *mahua* spirit (or five bottles) to the girl's parents, taking care to arrive at their house at about four or five o'clock in the afternoon. The father of the youth opens the door of the girl's house, places the liquor bottles inside the threshold and rejoins his party, all of whom sit silent outside the door. The girl's parents then call in some of the elders of their village, and in their presence tell the girl that this liquor has been brought on her account, and ask her if she is willing to go and live with the youth in the village from which the liquor has come. If the girl agrees, the liquor is at once drunk by the parties from the two villages, and the girl's parents entertain the visiting party to supper; if she refuses, the youth's parents take the liquor back to their village. This ceremony
[787] is called *talq-da'ina* ('going to ask'). It may take place on any day of the year, Hill Marias recking nothing of auspicious days or omens.

There is a second *talq-da'ina*, generally after an interval of about a year; it sometimes takes place sooner, but it is considered bad form to be too importunate. The youth does not go with his parents even this time; he does not, indeed, meet his betrothed between the first *talq-da'ina* and marriage, as, once a girl's hand

has been formally demanded, shame prevents her looking at her 584
betrothed. The parents this time do not take the village elders with them, but bring a rupee's worth of *mahua*, as before. The purpose of the visit is to ask the girl's parents if they are now ready to give the girl in marriage, or want to wait another six months or year; if they are poor, they may not have had time to collect enough to meet their share of the cost of the wedding, and this is the only possible justification for further postponement of the wedding. Normally the girl's parents say they are ready, and ask the youth's parents to come for the girl in ten days' time. This visit occurs generally at the end of Phagur or early in Chaita month, because, although marriages may take place at any time of year, they almost always take place in Chaita, when there is no field work and there is plenty of grain in hand from the freshly garnered harvest. Before this visit the amount of the bride-price or *paring*, 583
settled at the previous *talq-da'ina*, should be ready, and the girl's parents signify their readiness to give the girl by asking the youth's parents to bring the bride-price in ten days' time. The amount of the bride-price varies with the means of the youth's family. It consists of a rupee's worth of new cloth for the bride's mother, a gelded pig, one *paili* (four pounds) of salt, one *paili* of ground *ambari* (roselle) flowers, one or two pounds of red chillies, two or three pieces of turmeric, and, according to the means of the bridegroom's family, from one to four *duti* baskets each containing ten *paili* (forty pounds) of husked *kuthi*, from eight annas' to three rupees' worth of *mahua* spirit, and from Rs. 5 to Rs. 40 in cash. It is the cash portion of the bride-price that is avoided or reduced by cross-cousin marriage or such arrangements as the marriage of a brother and sister of one family to the sister and brother of another; other items are unaffected; the bride's mother must always get her cloth, and the pig and grain are eaten at the wedding.

On the day appointed for bringing the bride-price the bride- 585
groom stays at home, but his father and mother, taking the bride-price, proceed to the bride's village, accompanied by all their fellow-villagers, and preceded by three or four drummers. The villagers who go with them, men, women, boys and girls, do not expect to be fed entirely at the expense of the bridegroom's parents, and therefore take their own food and drink for the first meal on arrival; it is felt that to be entertained at the expense of the parents would not be helping them, but adding to the financial burden of the wedding.

On arrival, the bridegroom's parents make the bride-price over to the bride's parents, and all the visiting party then cook their food and eat it apart from the bride's parents and co-villagers. After

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

585 this supper both parties assemble in front of the bride's house, the men and youths in dancing-dress, and there is dancing and singing till dawn, all men, women, youths and girls present being free to take part, whether married or single, old or young. Soon after dawn the pig, grain and liquor brought by the bridegroom's parents as part of the bride-price are divided into a portion for the bride's village and a portion for the visiting village, cooked and partaken of by all present; any deficiency is made up by the girl's parents, this being their only expense; they do not even decorate their house or put up booths for the guests.

This wedding breakfast over, the bride is brought out by her parents and made over to the bridegroom's parents. She is not washed or given special clothes, though if funds permit she sometimes gets a new loin-cloth. She is expected to weep profusely in token of reluctance to leave her father's home. The bridegroom's parents take her on foot through the forest to their village, arriving always in the evening. The bridegroom stays in his house; to go out to meet the bride would be immodest. She is escorted to his house, thrust inside, and the marriage is thus completed without further ceremony. There is no present from the bridegroom to the bride, not even a ring as among the Bison-horn Marias. Supper that night is cooked for the couple by the bridegroom's mother.

Child marriage

582
177 Pre-puberty marriage never occurs among the Hill Marias, who look upon it as an utterly abhorrent custom of the Kosor or Hindus. Unfortunately a few Bison-horn Marias are beginning to ape their Hindu neighbours in this as in other matters; but even now probably only three in a hundred Bison-horn marriages are child marriages.

Serving for a wife

583 It is very common for the bridegroom to serve his future father-in-law for his bride instead of paying the bride-price. If at the second *talq-da'ina* his parents have to admit to the girl's parents that they cannot afford the bride-price, it is arranged for the bridegroom to go as *lamana'i* or suitor-servant to the girl's parents for a term of years that varies from three years to seven or eight, though when the term exceeds three years the girl usually becomes the *lamana'i's* wife for the last two years. For the first part of his service the *lamana'i* is not supposed to have intercourse with the girl, but, provided that the girl agrees (and she is seldom reluctant), he generally does so after a time. It is, however, considered a disgrace to her parents if in consequence she becomes pregnant, and they are fined a pig, which is eaten by all their and the *lamana'i's* clansmen, after which the girl is regarded as the *lamana'i's* wife. Often at the end of the agreed period of service the father-in-law is unwilling

to let his daughter go, or to lose the assistance of his future son-in-law; but in that case the marriage is at once celebrated, the *lamana'i* leaving his father-in-law's house where he has stayed for the period of his service for a house built for him in the father-in-law's village, and his parents and their party, after the wedding dance and breakfast, take the girl and leave her there with him instead of in their own village; but thereafter no *lamana'i* ever stays more than two years in his father-in-law's village. Provided that the girl has not become pregnant, there is always a regular *marmi* wedding at the end of the agreed term, the bride's parents meeting the expenses; if she has become pregnant, after the penal feast of pork already mentioned she becomes the *lamana'i's* wife merely by passing into his keeping by *ottur*. 583

This account of marriage by service is based entirely on investigations among the Hill Marias; but it is equally common among the Bison-horn Marias, and their practice is much the same except that, of course, the regular marriage at the end of the term of service is the ordinary Bison-horn *pendul* wedding, while, owing to the fact that in all villages there are many houses and fields belonging to clans other than the original clan that founded the village, the *lamana'i* often settles permanently in his father-in-law's village, and breaks up new land for himself with the consent of the *pedda* or headman.

Bison-horn Maria betrothal ('talpena') and marriage ('pendul')

Among Bison-horn Marias a father wishing to ask another man for his daughter's hand for his son goes to him with a few relatives and takes a *paili* of rice, and a large earthen pot (*handi*) and a small earthen pot (*dudi*) of *mahua* spirit. As already stated in the section on omens, the party will turn back if it meets a bad omen on the way, and postpone the journey for a fortnight. On their arrival at the girl's house her father calls his relatives and the village elders; when all have assembled, the father of the prospective bridegroom formally asks the girl's father for the girl as his son's wife. Sometimes the visiting father comes rather to assert his right to the girl in *gudapal* marriage, and before either his son or the girl has attained puberty, than in the expectation of arranging the wedding in the near future, especially if he has heard rumours of the girl being given to someone else; in such cases the girl's father almost always refuses to give his girl at least till both the boy and the girl are mature, and the boy's father formally declares that he will never renounce his *gudapal* rights. It has already been said that the Bison-horn Marias assert these rights more strongly than the Hill Marias, among whom the *gudapal* tie is rather a convenient and economical arrangement than a binding 584 contract; they therefore attach less importance to the consent of 584 the girl, and even if a father or his son agree to the *gudapal* girl marrying some other husband, the latter has to compensate the *gudapal* cousin. If a girl's father raises objections to the proposed match, whether a *gudapal* match or not, bitter quarrels often follow; but generally the boy and girl have learnt their own minds before this first formal demand for the girl (*talpana* in the Bison-horn dialect), or there has been previous informal discussion between the two families. Normally, therefore, the youth and girl both being mature, the girl's father gladly agrees to give his girl, and then the youth's father gives him the *paili* of rice and the large and the small pots of *mahua* liquor. The girl's father takes the small pot into [769] the *narma-lon* room of his house, and pours a small quantity on the ground in front of the Pot of the Departed as a libation, the rest being drunk by him and the members of his family. The liquor in the large pot is divided among the relatives and friends of both families who have come to witness the *talpana*, and all disperse except the youth's father and his companions; the rice which he has brought is cooked and served to them and the girl's family. Her father then invites the youth's father to come again for the formal declaration of the betrothal to all his relatives and friends from near and far. The visitors then return to their village.

Some time later the father of the youth in consultation with [787] his friends, and often with the aid of a medium, fixes a day for this second visit, and sends word to the girl's father in good time for him to invite all his relatives and friends. This time he and his party take with them a small pig, two *paili* of rice, a very large pot of *landa* and a large and a small pot of *mahua* spirit. On arrival at the girl's house they are greeted by her father and the assembled guests, and the former announces the betrothal to the company and asks for their formal approval. This given, the girl's father as [769] before pours a libation to the Departed from the small pot of *mahua*, and he and his household drink the rest of its contents. The large pots of *landa* and *mahua* spirit are consumed by all the assembled guests, *barbatti* beans being fried by the girl's mother and served along with the *landa*; and the rice and pork are cooked and served to all present. All then go.

Yet a third preliminary visit to the girl's father follows, the date being arranged as before by the youth's father, and word being sent to the girl's father. This time the former and his party take and deliver to the latter two large pots of *landa*, two large and one small pots of *mahua* spirit; five *paili* of rice or *kutki*, and a large pig. The youth's father tells the girl's father that he intends to

celebrate his son's marriage on a certain date, and asks him to 584
deliver the girl to him on the appointed day; in reply he agrees
to do so, but calls on the youth's father to settle the bride-price
then and there, and to deliver it to him when he comes for the girl.
Bison-horn Marias do not use the word *paring* for the bride-price,
but either the Chhattisgarhi Hindi word *barna*, the Halbi word
jora, or, more commonly, the ordinary Hindi term for expenses,
harcha. They then discuss terms. If it is a *gudapal* union, the
girl's father expects only to get as much *landa*, *mahua* spirit, grain
and cloth as his family had to pay in the previous generation when
he married her mother. A Bison-horn marriage is extremely 583
expensive to the bridegroom's parents because they are expected
to keep open house, and guests pour in uninvited from all villages 584
to which the throb of the marriage drums reverberates; and
therefore the actual bride-price is kept as low as possible. In fact,
in many *parganas* they assert that no cash passes from the bride-
groom's parents to the bride's. The practice varies; a single rupee
passed in the weddings that I saw, though in certain disputes that
came to my notice after a wife had eloped with another man the
first husband claimed from the new husband the refund of cash
alleged to have formed part of the bride-price. In general, however,
cash is not the important element in the Bison-horn that it is in the
Hill Maria bride-price. Usually the bride-price consists of from
five to ten very large pots of *landa*, one *paili* of husked rice or *kutki*
for every pot of *landa*, two large and one small pots of *mahua* spirit,
a large gelded pig ready slaughtered, a cock, and about four yards
of Mahra cloth for the bride's mother, the cloth being sometimes
called in Hindi *ma'i-lugra*. Another consideration is the cost of
the dinner that the girl's father has to give to his relatives before
the girl is taken away, known as *suttam-jawa*, and of her going-away
presents; in the discussion about the bringing of the bride-price
on the wedding-day suggested by the bridegroom's father, the girl's
father sometimes alleges that he is too poor to collect the necessary
food and presents by the suggested date and that he must therefore
have another year before handing over his daughter, unless the
bridegroom's father will help him with a loan in cash or in kind.
The loan is readily made if the latter is well-to-do. These matters
being settled, the bride's father formally promises to hand the girl
over on the appointed day, and the promise is ratified by the usual
libation from the small pot of *mahua* to the Departed of the girl's
family, and the consumption of the *landa* and the *mahua* spirit
by all present, the bridegroom's father and his party returning
to their village after having been entertained to dinner by the
bride's father.

585 There is now no obstacle to the wedding. The appointed day may be any auspicious day in the year, chosen in the manner explained in the section on omens; but in practice almost all weddings take place in the early hot weather, as among the Hill Marias. I will first give a general outline of the wedding procedure, and then reproduce, with some revisions, an account of an actual wedding which I saw at Ganjenar and Masenar between Dantewara and Kuakonda in May 1930; the account has already been published in the *Central Provinces Census Report*, 1931.

On the afternoon of the wedding day the bridegroom, his parents and many relatives of both sexes proceed to the girl's father's house with the agreed bride-price. On arrival the bridegroom's father delivers the bride-price to the bride's father, the cloth for her mother being placed on top of one of the large pots of *landa*, and asks him to hand the bride over. In response the [769] bride's father takes up the small pot of *mahua* spirit, and after the usual libation to his Departed in his *narma-lon* room drinks a little spirit and gives the rest to the members of the household. *Landa* is then taken from one of the pots brought as bride-price and from one of those provided by the bride's father, and distributed to all the guests present, both from the bridegroom's and the bride's villages and clans. Meanwhile the bride is bathed at the nearest pool by women relatives, and a bevy of the women of her village and clan keep up a constant chorus of song, to the occasional beating of drums. After the bride's father has entertained all present of both parties to the *suttam-jawa* or relatives' dinner, consisting of grain and the flesh of the pig brought as part of the bride-price, the girl is brought out by her father or brother towards dusk, and handed over to the bridegroom, their hands being joined and rings exchanged. The senior woman relative of the family takes up the cloth brought for the bride's mother, and wraps it round her, while a male member of the family hands the bridegroom's father a hind-leg of the bride-price pig, to be taken to his village to feed the bridegroom and bride and the bridegroom's family. The bridegroom's party then escort the bridegroom and bride with the bride's going-away presents to the bridegroom's village, accompanied by the girl's relatives and fellow-villagers. Special booths are prepared at this village for the bride's relatives. On arrival, the bride and bridegroom are taken into his father's house to the Place of the Departed in his *narma-lon* room and seated there with the father, brothers and mother of the bridegroom; they eat the hind-leg of pork brought from the bride's house after it has been cooked on the Hearth of the Departed. Meanwhile the other guests sit down to pork and rice cooked separately outside the

PLATE XIX

585

The pouring of water over the bridegroom and bride at the Bison-horn Maria wedding described at p. 258

142
301
304

An old Bison-horn Maria from Gudra, between Katakalian and Kuakonda

[*face p.* 254

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

[facing p.254]

585 house, and are given *landa* to drink. At the meal in the Place of the Departed the couple are exhorted by the bridegroom's father to live together in unity and concord, and to be faithful. All night the drums roll and guests pour in to dance and drink *landa* or sing around the bride and bridegroom, the men wearing their bison-horn dancing head-dresses. Ultimately next morning the couple are made to stand on a hurdle under the eaves of the hut constructed for them, and a kinsman of the girl's father climbs on the roof and tips a pot of water over them. The boy then drags the girl into [353] the hut, both pushed by willing hands, and the door is fastened on them and a bamboo-matting curtain hung over it. After a while they emerge, and the bride takes a ceremonial farewell of the girls of her village, and the guests disperse. Finally in the evening she is thrust into the bridal hut by her husband's younger brothers and his friends, her husband being already inside awaiting her.

In the account of the Ganjenar-Massenar wedding which follows, naturally no description can be given of the scenes in the *narma-lon* rooms of the bride's and bridegroom's fathers, to which outsiders are not admitted, or of other parts of the wedding ceremonies which I did not actually see. The bridegroom was the son of Atrami Hunga of Massenar, the younger brother of Atrami Kopa Dhurwa, a very influential headman who was decorated by the late Raja of Bastar for keeping that *pargana* quiet during the 1910 rebellion, and the bride was the daughter of Kunjami Harma, the headman of Ganjenar. When I reached the latter's house, which was about two miles from my camp at Massenar, the bridegroom and his party had arrived, and the relatives' dinner was over. The bride had gone to a tank to be bathed by her elder sister and her brother's wife; the bridegroom and his father were walking about talking to the guests and the bride's male relatives. There were not many persons present, perhaps 150 all told; a few men were beating their dancing drums, but none were wearing their bison-horn head-dresses. Around the door of the separate sleeping hut used [533 831 195] by Kunjami Harma's daughters and other womenfolk, some thirty women were standing shoulder to shoulder, swaying to and fro and singing a choral refrain of '*Kohelin-waya*' to obscene verses sung by a laughing woman in the centre of the group. Another band of women hurled abuse at them at intervals, when the leader of each band tried to out-Billingsgate the other.

535 585 When the bride had been bathed, she emerged from the sleeping hut with a cloth wrapped over her shoulders, and was dragged into a chain of dancing and singing girls with their arms closely linked, while the bridegroom, also with a cloth over his shoulders, was passed into another chain. These chains of girls circled and

535 gyrated in all directions, at one moment appearing inextricably
585 mixed together, only to disentangle miraculously at the next and
weave themselves into fresh spirals and circles, singing abuse at
each other. All the while the group of standing girls went on
[533] swaying and singing round the door; the leader caused great
laughter by improvising a song warning all girls to be on their guard
that night, for the Diwan, the Tahsildar and the Circle Inspector
were watching them, and who knew what might happen after dark?

583 Before we arrived the bridegroom's party had presented the
bride-price, which consisted of one slaughtered pig, a live pig, five
431 very large pots of *landa*, five *paili* of husked rice, four yards of
Mahra cloth for the bride's mother, and one rupee. While the
585 chains of girls were dancing around the bride and bridegroom, her
mother's sister came out and displayed the bride's going-away
presents, a *masni* or grass sleeping-mat, a small basket containing
about a *paili* of husked rice, a large pot of *landa*, and a young bull
calf newly weaned.

Some men wearing their bison-horn dancing head-dresses and
585 beating their long drums now started to dance near the gyrating
chains of girls, and there was a further accompaniment to the singing
of bamboo flutes. The two chains of girls suddenly opened out, leaving the bridegroom and bride together, and the girl's father and the bridegroom's elder brother were with them, holding their hands. The old father, Kunjami Harma, held up his hand for silence, and started a long speech, asking the bridegroom's elder brother, 'Have you come willingly for this flower? Will you wear it and cherish it? It is fresh and tender, and will not bear rough handling. Know you how witless women are? If she be a poor housekeeper, pardon her. If she cook badly, pardon her. If she speak to other men, do not take it amiss, but pardon her.' There were other similar injunctions, and to all the bridegroom's brother answered yes. Then Kunjami Harma took his daughter, who took the bridegroom's right hand, and placed on his little finger a ring that she had pulled off the little finger of her own right hand; the bridegroom then took a ring off his own left little finger and placed it on hers; cloths were held over their heads while this exchange was in progress. The bridegroom then took off another ring, which the girl's elder sister received in her outstretched cloth, while she said, 'From now onwards you must neither touch me nor utter my name till I am dead. If you do, all will laugh at you, and your brethren will fine you.' I was told that if she dies before him, he will take a ring off her little finger and wear it on the middle finger of his right hand. He also gave a ring to the bride's younger sister, for he is free to touch her and to talk of her by name. Then his

585 elder brother touched the old man's feet, and the old man touched his, and then each placed his hands on the other's shoulders, standing face to face, and leaned his head forward first on the other's right, then on his left shoulder; finally each salaamed the other with both hands held in front of his face, palm to palm, and said '*Juhar!*' Each of them then exchanged similar salutations with all their near relatives present and the leading guests, including myself and the other State officials present.

The girls now started singing again, telling the bride that she must leave them and go to her man, that her lot would be hard, and that if she did not like her man she should make up her mind to leave him. Meanwhile the bridegroom slipped off over the fields to his father's house at Massenar to be ready there to receive the party escorting the bride.

The bridal procession then formed up, led by some thirty women, singing and side-stepping along the narrow jungle path in the gathering darkness. After them walked the elders, then a party of drummers, followed by the bride, pretending to struggle against a cluster of laughing girls pushing her to Massenar. All danced as they went, beating their jangling dancing sticks on the ground in time with the drums and the steps of the dance. It took them two and a half hours to cover the two miles to the bridegroom's father's house in Massenar.

585 535 There a multitude of other girls and men received them, the men all in the traditional dancing costume, with a thundering roll of drums, while dozens of bombs of gunpowder and rice chaff were exploded. The full moon beat down on a sea of tossing plumes, or shone back from the glistening bison-horns of the head-dresses, till the whole courtyard was full of rampaging and fantastic movement. The bride and bridegroom were seized by fifty girls, and made to sit in their midst in front of the house where they were later to live, all packed as closely as sardines, swaying to and fro on their hips as they sat, and singing obscene marriage songs in full-throated chorus, while all prodded and plucked at every part of the bodies of the bride and bridegroom, whose heads were muffled in cloths. [553 831]

After watching this for some time I went off to my tent for dinner, but returned towards midnight. The bride and bridegroom were still where I had left them, surrounded by the swaying and singing girls. Some of these had babies sleeping in their laps as they sang, and many, tired out, were sleeping, hemmed in by their companions. The crowds had swollen, and every forest path was thronged with men and women hastening with drums and dancing kit to join the dance. Some came from villages twenty-five or

585 535 thirty miles away, but showed no sign of fatigue. Around the dance many were lying already drunk, for sixty large pots of *landa* had been provided for the guests. Now and again an excited youth and girl would leave the dance and disappear in the trees. But there must always have been over two thousand men dancing; and those who had been overcome by the *landa* would return to the dance as soon as they had slept off their intoxication.

[831] All night the drumming and dancing went on, though when I returned to the scene at 7.30 a.m. many men were lying asleep or drunk or merely resting, with piled drums and head-dresses. Now many men wearing black gourd masks with thick hair and beards of black bear's fur and carrying thick bamboo sticks, dummy guns and nets, rushed in and out among the dancers, making obscene gestures with their sticks at the dancing and watching girls, to the general merriment. Looking for the bride and bridegroom, I found them, their heads still covered with the same cloths, riding on the shoulders of their sisters' husbands in the middle of a ring formed by a long chain of girls with arms outstretched and hands clasped, who headed off all the efforts of the 'steeds' to break out of the ring with their riders.

585 The fathers of the couple now decided that the time had come for the final ceremonies; the sun was getting hot, and the *landa* supplies low, for the dancers continued at intervals to leave the dance for a drink and a nap before the maddening beat of the drums called them out once again. A bamboo wicker-work hurdle was placed on the ground in front of the door of the hut where the couple was to spend its married life. To this the bride and bridegroom were led, and when they were standing on it they were at last freed from the cloths in which their heads had been enveloped for the last twelve hours. As they stood there hand in hand, the girl's father's brother climbed on to the eaves of the hut[1] with a large pot of cold and dirty water, and suddenly tipped its contents over the bride and bridegroom, whereupon, amid general laughter, the bridegroom seized the bride, and both rushed into the hut, the door of which was closed and curtained upon them.^ But they were allowed only ten minutes' privacy 'to discuss what they would do that night', as the bridegroom's old father explained; and even then they cannot have heard each other speak for the din of the drumming and dancing, which had not ceased for a moment even when the water was poured from the roof.

After ten minutes the bride emerged, and was surrounded by the girls of her own village, who in unison sang to her advice on a wife's duties and rights, urging her to return to them if her husband ill-treated her, while she provided a chorus of simulated 585 wailing. They took her off to the booths prepared for her parents and the guests from her village, and sat there with her for the rest of the morning and all the afternoon, taking their food there, while the rest of the guests finished the *landa* and slowly dispersed, beating their drums, along the forest paths. At about 5.30 p.m. the bridegroom entered the bridal hut alone, while his younger brother went to the booth where the bride had spent the afternoon, cried 'Come, sister-in-law, it is time that you were bedded,' caught her by the hand and tried to drag her off. She screamed and feigned resistance, but he called four or five other laughing youths to help him, and between them they pulled the girl to the door of the bridal hut, opened it and pushed her in, barring the door on the outside. Then they stole a cock from the bridegroom's coop, and, accompanied by the girls who had come with the bride from her village, plucked the cock and scattered its feathers along a path leading to a forest glade, where they cooked and ate it, and all dispersed.

---

[1] This is illustrated in Plate XIX. ^[See cat. 116, pp. 424-25, -Ans.]

Irregular marriages, widow marriages and divorce; attitude to abnormalities

The *ottur* and *ahenehattu* forms of marriage among the Hill 589 Marias have already been mentioned; the same forms exist among the Bison-horn Marias. Actually women are very free to change their attachments or, if unattached, to go to the house of the man of their choice and live with him as his wife even if he is already married. It is convenient for the man to have the services of an extra woman in a society in which so much work is done by women; and it is not considered right for [589] a nubile woman to be unattached. Particularly among the Bison-horn Marias, men with two or three wives are common; only one 588 of these will be a regularly married wife, and the others will be 575 either her younger sisters or parallel-cousins or other women who have come into the husband's keeping of their own choice, or after becoming pregnant as a result of a liaison with him. The expression commonly used by the Bison-horn Marias for a woman going in this way to live with a man is the local and Chhattisgarhi Hindi term *paisa-sundi*, and the unions are known as *paithu* or *odiyattur*; there seems to be no difference between these, just as for practical purposes there is little between the *ottur* and *ahenehattu* forms of the Hill Marias. Where an unmarried woman is made pregnant, and 588 becomes the man's wife by living at his house, the man has to give his fellow-clansmen an entertainment (*paithu*) or dinner, and pay the usual bride-price. Husbands have similarly to give a dinner when unmarried girls, wives or widows, of their own choice and without their guardians' consent, go to live with him; but in such

588 cases there is no bride-price, though the deserted husband can claim from the new husband the bride-price which he paid when he married the woman, a *gudapal* cousin can claim Rs. 5 compensation if an unmarried girl goes to some other man, and a younger brother of the dead husband can claim Rs. 5 compensation if a widow goes to a new husband. Sometimes when parents or parties to a marriage are very poor and cannot afford the expense of a regular wedding they merely start to live together in this way, either performing the marriage ceremony later when they have had time to collect the means required, or else distributing tiny cakes to their clan-fellows instead. The term *aghmirtur* or *armirtur* is sometimes applied to the elopement of an unmarried girl or a wife with another man.

Poyse'otur or marriage by capture still occurs, though getting
583 rarer every year. We have seen how, when a girl remains unmarried her parents will arrange for her cross-cousin to carry her off; and in the Bison-horn *pendul* regular marriage described above there is an element of marriage by capture in the way in which the bride feigns resistance when the bridegroom's party begins to escort her to his village and when she is finally parted from the girls of her own village with a show of force by the bridegroom's younger brother and his friends. In fact, the Hill and Bison-horn Maria custom of the bride being taken off from her native village to the bridegroom's village and of the wedding taking place there may be a survival of a former general custom of marriage by capture. When the girl is unmarried and is carried off by her cross-cousin at her parents' request, they usually explain matters to her as she is being carried off and advise her to make the best of it. I found only one Bison-horn Maria who admitted having really captured his wife in the good old way once so prevalent in the Killepal, Dantewara, Pharaspal, Kuakonda and Aranpur *parganas*, probably in the whole of the Bison-horn country. He was reticent about the whole affair, though apparently the girl had been willing to marry him, but her parents had objected. According to old records the practice was for the villagers of the girl's village to beat the invading party of youths until it had crossed the village boundary with the girl; Russell and Hiralal (III, p. 79) state that the women only used to beat the invaders in this way, the invaders making no effort to retaliate, and the marriage being completed by the gift of a cloth to the girl on arrival in the captor's village and a *landa* carousal by the invading party.

587 Widow marriage is common among all Marias. In the hills, widows usually go to their husband's younger brothers without any

ceremony ; I found no case in which any widow had married a man 587
who was not her dead husband's brother (or parallel-cousin).
Indeed, owing to the distances between Hill Maria villages and the
fact that in nearly all of them the men are all of one clan, irregular
marriages are far less common there than in the mixed-clan villages
of the Bison-horn Marias. Among the latter the second husband
has sometimes to compensate the dead husband's parents in part
for the bride-price paid by them when their son married the widow,
as well as compensating their younger son, if any. Sometimes the
widow and second husband sit side by side on stools, the widow
wearing a new cloth and new ornaments, and near relatives put
marks on their foreheads with oil and turmeric. There is also [618]
sometimes a ceremony to transfer the widow from the clan of her
former to that of her new husband ; two pieces of grass are placed
together in the form of a cross to represent a man, and this cross is
separated from another by a knife. Two leaf-cups are filled with
water, and three times water is poured from one into the other.
The two grass crosses representing the two husbands are sprinkled
thrice with the water, and then the heads of the crosses are plunged
together first into one cup and then into the other. The knife is
regarded as the witness of this transfer of the woman from one clan
to the other. When a woman elopes from one husband to another, 587
there is sometimes a similar reconciliation ceremony between the
two men after the new husband has obeyed the *panchayat's* decision 586
as to the compensation to be paid to the first husband ; their four
hands are placed together, and water is poured thrice over them.

It has been seen that women not only have practically free 586
choice among the Hill Marias and considerable choice among the
Bison-horn Marias as to their husbands, and that among the latter
a woman frequently goes off to a new husband if she wants to. This
is practically all that there is in the way of divorce, the position
being regularised by the *panchayat* insisting on the new husband
paying the appropriate compensation, which is generally only the
bride-price paid for the woman at her original marriage. The
children, if any, remain in the father's custody, since they belong
to his clan. Women often desert their first husband if they have
no children and consider his sterility the cause. Physical revulsion 586
from an abnormality is another known cause ; a Kuruk Maria
fishing girl in the Behra Mar hill *pargana* ran away from a husband 732
with a withered leg, which she said had been wasted away by an
angry demon (*rau*), and despite her father's and brother's entreaties
to her not to put them to the expense of having to refund to her
husband the heavy bride-price of Rs. 70 that he had paid them for
her, absolutely refused to return. Hare-lipped men seem to have

586
732
no difficulty in getting wives to stay with them. Dwarfs, on the other hand, not only find it hard to get wives except their elder brothers' widows, but are passed over in the succession to a post of responsibility or the management of a family. Madness is particularly dreaded, and would certainly involve the elopement of a wife. But husbands, though they would divorce a mad [833] woman *a thoro*, would still maintain them; sexual intercourse with a mad woman is believed to result in complete loss of virility. 586 I have heard of no case in which a husband has divorced his wife; she may be frigid or barren or in other ways unsatisfactory, but so long as she is not unfaithful her husband is expected to maintain her, and his remedy is to seek another co-wife, often getting her younger sister or parallel-cousin as compensation for her falling [678] short of expectations. The murder of wives in sudden fits of temper for petty shortcomings is unfortunately common among the Bison-horn Marias, though almost unknown in the hills. Nor must it [837] be assumed that because Bison-horn wives often elope, their husbands tamely submit to infidelity; the detection of an intrigue often results in the husband killing the wife or her paramour, though once a wife has made good her escape to another man's house the [593] husband usually accepts the *fait accompli*. The beating or ill-treatment of wives is strongly condemned by all Marias.[4]

[4] [See cat. 116, p. 425.—Analyst]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

CHAPTER XV

BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD

A. Hill Marias

No Marias are unaware of the causal connexion between intercourse 842
and pregnancy, and all women know when they miss their first
menstruation that they are probably starting to bear a child. 843
Pregnancy among Hill Marias is attended by no taboo either for
man or wife, so far as I could ascertain, and the wife continues
performing her ordinary routine work right up to the last day of her
pregnancy. Sexual intercourse, however, ceases as soon as pregnancy
is known to have begun.

During ordinary menstruation, as we have seen in Chapter VI, 841
the wife, like all young women, is secluded for five or six days either
in the communal menstruation hut, or in the *kala* or menstruation
room or the separate menstruation hut of the house. The menstruation huts, whether communal or private, are known as *pedawo'gha'i*,
or (in the south of the Abujhmar hills) as *dola-lon*, or (in the extreme
north) as *kurma-lon*. The term *pedawo'gha'i* is applied also sometimes to the *kala* room in the houses. These huts and rooms have
been described already on pages 104-6. The Hill Marias say that
their clan-god and their Departed would be angry if they gave up
their immemorial custom of secluding their women during menstruation, and that no man should see a woman's face at such a time; we
have seen that they often guard against the magic of women in this [789]
condition by placing castor oil plants and seeds on the roof of the
hut when it is occupied. The men do not seem to have any clear
idea of what happens to a woman at such times; they only know
and say that she 'has gone *pedawo'gha'i*'. There is no ceremony [881]
of any kind at a girl's first menstruation, or during pregnancy.
Though children are generally born in the menstruation room or [844]
hut, and for some time after birth the mother has to live there
subject to the same prohibitions as during menstruation, yet during 843
her nine months she is free from the ordinary taboos to which she is
subject during menstruation; that is to say, she is free to visit
her husband in the fields and to cook his food for him, in fact to do
all her ordinary household and field or market tasks. But it is
taboo for a pregnant woman to pick or break anything growing.
There may possibly be certain prohibitions which I did not discover,

843 such as, in other parts of India, of the use of a knife or the cutting of anything; but ordinary enquiry elicited no clue to them.

844 It was said on page 106 that children are born in the menstruation hut or room. This is certainly the case so far as the private huts and rooms are concerned; but in my notes it is not clear whether births ever take place in the communal menstruation hut. They probably do not, because obviously it may be needed at any time for other women of the village, and I have notes of children in Hikpulla and Nugur, where there are communal menstruation huts, being born in a corner of the veranda of the house specially walled off for the purpose.

[777] Cases are known of a mother being delivered of a child in the fields or the forest, but this is considered very unlucky, and as soon as the mother knows that her hour is upon her, she must make every effort to get in time to the menstruation hut or room. During delivery she may have the comfort of the presence of her mother-in-law or some woman from the village; but there are no midwives, and the woman with her must not touch her or assist the delivery; the mother is expected to do everything for herself, and it is regarded as very wrong if she is unable to do so. They pray to the clan-god during a difficult delivery, but appear to do nothing else to assist the mother by either medicine or ceremony. The mother herself has to cut the navel-cord of her baby either with her husband's ordinary knife or with an arrow-head. She cuts it about three or four inches from its junction with the stomach, and binds it close to the junction with a ligature of cord, the portion between the cut and the ligature being left to dry and fall off; and she is expected to bury the placenta (*modi*) immediately after this under the house rubbish-heap outside the back of the house. If the child is born
[845 dead, the mother has to bury it somewhere in the forest, going there alone and digging the grave without assistance; it may not be
766] buried in the regular village graveyard. Around Handawada a mother is expected to stay in the menstruation room for a full month after delivery; but the general rule in the interior of the Abujhmar hills is for her to remain there for eight days or until the navel-cord dries and falls off.

846 Everywhere it is taboo for the father to do any field or other work during this period of eight days before the navel-cord falls. No medicine is given to him. He must not sleep in the house during the period in most parts of the hills, but in the dormitory; around Handawada he sleeps in the portion of the *kala* room separated from the woman's portion by the *binda* mud threshold. He must not cook his own food during this period, and has to get a man friend to cook food for him in another house and bring it to

him. He has, however, to cook food for his wife. The latter during ordinary menstrual periods stays, in villages where there are menstrual rooms or private and not communal menstruation huts, on her side of the mud threshold and keeps there special water-pots and cooking pots; her husband brings food and water in the regular pots, and, standing on his non-taboo side of the mud threshold, pours their contents into the menstruation water and cooking pots. But as he may never touch the latter, he cannot use them for preparing food for his wife after child-birth, and so has to buy a special set of pots for cooking her food then, which are destroyed at the end of her period of seclusion. Nor is the husband permitted to enter the ordinary rooms of the house until the child's navel-cord has fallen off; he has to build a temporary room at the back of the house near the menstruation room or hut, and cook there. It is taboo for him to give any other person any fire from the hearth in this temporary kitchen. Breach of the taboos attaching to child-birth by either parent is believed to entail the wrath of the Village Mother. During the period of seclusion the mother is permitted to leave the room only to bury the placenta or to answer the call of nature. As it is taboo for her to pick or break anything growing during the period, she has before her delivery to lay in enough leaves for cleaning herself after defecation to last for the full period. She wears nothing but the *mudang* until the end of the period. 846 [514]

After the navel-cord has fallen off or at the end of the period of seclusion, the mother goes out at night to the river, immerses herself, and cleans her old loin-cloth and the cloth of her *mudang*. In the early morning she emerges wearing her loin-cloth and carrying her baby, which in most villages her husband then sees for the first time; around Handawada, however, he is allowed to see it in the menstruation room on the morning after it is born. The mother has to sprinkle every part of the house with water.

From birth to death there is no age ceremony of any kind, 852
neither at birth, naming, weaning, ear-boring, hair-cutting, puberty,
first shaving, nor on any other occasion. Normally
Naming the child gets no name until it is two or three years 553
old, when its parents know its physique and something of its character. But there are three exceptions to this. When the child is brought out from the place where it was born at the end of the initial period of seclusion, it is examined for birth-marks; and if these are considered to be the same as those of a dead ancestor it is given that ancestor's name, or, if, for example, the child is a boy and has his father's mother's birth-marks, it gets her husband's name. Thus Usendi Moda, the headman of Orcha, was called after his dead grandfather because he had the same mole on his hip as he;

553 Yete Mura, the headman of Hoinar, was born hare-lipped and was therefore named after his hare-lipped paternal grandfather; and Jugho Dallu, the headman of Hitulnar, recognized on his son the birth-marks of his dead mother Pora'i and therefore gave him the [775] name of her dead husband Dugha. This practice is a sign of some sort of belief in the reincarnation of the Departed. The second exception is the practice of giving a name immediately after birth when birth has coincided with some natural phenomenon or incident. Usendi Ippo of Orcha was called Ippo because born when the *mahua* tree (*ippa marra* in Maria) was in flower; Usendi Irka was born when the cucumbers (*irka*) were ripening in the *penda* fields; Usendi Ghasi was so named because, just before he was born, a *patwari* rode into Orcha and ordered his father Moda to go and cut grass (*ghas* in Halbi) for his pony. Oyami Gursha, headman of Komu, was born when his father and uncles were making a wicker-work bin (*gursha*) for storing grain. Yete Mura named his daughter Reko because she was born when the *reka marra* tree (*Aegle marmelos*) was in fruit. The third exception, which, like the first, indicates some belief, if not in reincarnation, at least in a previous existence, is the practice when a new-born baby cries loudly for three or four days of reciting to it all the names that the parents can remember and giving it the last name uttered before it stops crying, on the theory that it has stopped crying on recognizing its name. Normally, however, the name is not given till the child is two or three, and then depends on such things as whether it is fat or thin, slow or smart, learnt to walk or speak quickly, and so on. Thus a boy was named Morlel or 'hare' because he used to double suddenly like a hare when running about the village; Bunge is a name given to a boy with a huge stomach; Baiyya or 'mad' to a harum-scarum boy; Banga to a shy, untalkative child; and U'ile or 'thin' to a child thin through much illness in his early years.

551 177 Russell and Hiralal state (III, p. 87) of the Gond race as a whole that names derived from the Gondi language are rare or non-existent and, on this assumption, actually suggest that perhaps the Gonds had not advanced to the stage of having individual names before they came into contact with the Hindus! This is certainly not true of either Hill or Bison-horn Marias. Of 103 male and 38 female Hill Maria names collected from 215 men and 107 women, and 103 male and 23 female Bison-horn Maria names collected from 236 men and 68 women, very few, not 5 per cent., were Hindu, the proportion of Hindu names being, as might be expected, slightly higher among the Bison-horn Marias. Only about 27 per cent. of the Hill Maria men's names and 8 per cent. of their women's names occur also, in the same or a modified form, in the lists of Bison-horn

Maria names, though, of course, very few Bison-horn women's 551 names were collected. A noticeable difference is the absence from the Hill Maria of names given according to the day of the week on 177 which the person named was born, such as Budhi (Wednesday), Mangru (Tuesday) and Lakhmu (Thursday); it has already been noted that the Hill Marias have no names for the days of the week.

Weaning

A child is breast-fed until it can both walk and 862 take its own food by hand, sometimes as long as three years. Unlike the Bison-horn Marias, the Hill Marias have no weaning ceremony.

Education

There is no system of training Hill Maria children corresponding 861 to the Gotul or Dormitory system of the Murias, except in the northernmost Hill Maria *parganas* of Padalbhum and Nurbhum. In the greater part of the Maria country, children learn simply by accompanying and imitating their parents and the elder boys of the village. At night the boys who are old enough to leave their mothers sleep in the communal dormitory, and in the evenings they sit outside the dormitory round the fire with the men of the village. When the corn is ripening and the men sleep in the field-houses, in many villages the dormitory is closed, and the boys sleep with their fathers or elder brothers in the fields. Thus from his earliest days the child learns the routine of village and tribal life from constant association with his elders. He is made to do his share of the field work, and taught the use of the bow and arrow and the setting of snares. Children of six and seven of both sexes join in the village and clan dances, very quickly mastering the steps. We have seen how they use bamboo *pak-dol* drums to master the rhythm of drumming. In the ordinary hill village there is nothing corresponding to the Muria custom of the dormitory owning and cultivating a field or fields and applying the proceeds either to dormitory feasts or to the purchase of beads; but in the Barsur Mar villages and, therefore, probably elsewhere in the Abujhmar hills fathers encourage children to keep their own pigs, which they sometimes sell to procure money or grain for buying beads and knives. Girls similarly soon learn domestic routine from their constant association with their mothers. They cannot associate with boys in the manner of the Murias, among whom every girl must attend the boys' dormitory every night and has her own *gotul* 'boy-friend' to serve, since these *gotul* unions must be between couples who could legitimately marry under the rules of exogamy, and in nearly all Hill Maria villages all the boys and girls are of the same clan and therefore kindred. Yet the girls make bead fillets, ear-tassels and necklaces for the boys, and the latter carve wooden combs for the girls.

861 The complete *gotul* organization is a feature of Muria and not of Hill Maria culture. But as it has extended to Padalibhum and Nurbhum (possibly also to parts of Tapalibhum and Behra Mar) among the Hill Marias, a brief account of its salient features will not be out of place; it may be expected to spread into the hills with the gradual improvement of communications. A fairly full account from my notes on the Murias has been printed in the *Census of India* 1931 *Report*, Vol. I, Part III B., pp. 81-3. It may be added that it is easier for the Marias of Padalibhum to copy their Muria neighbours because Padalibhum not only has two or three villages which are not Padali villages but belong to the Nuroti and Usendi clans, but even in Padali villages has settlers of these two clans, which are *akomama* (wife-clan) to them.

[858] Boys and girls of an age to visit the *gotul* dormitories are known
as *leyur* and *leyas* respectively. All the boys assemble at the
857 dormitory in the evening for dancing, games and social and sexual
571 training, sleeping on there after the departure of the girls to their
homes late in the night. The girls attend at the dormitory in the
864 evening, each girl being paired off with a boy of an *akomama* clan.
The girls have to comb their boys' hair and massage their arms and
legs, to dance with them, and to be initiated into the mysteries of
sex with them. Marriage frequently follows these dormitory
unions, but by no means always does. Children are expected to
attend the dormitory from the age of eleven or twelve, and the
parents may be fined for not sending them. Every boy and girl
has a special dormitory name or rank; the smaller children have
designations which are little more than names, but those of the
elder boys change as they are promoted, and involve special duties.
The Hill Marias seem to have adopted the ranks for the boys only,
the girls retaining the name given them on their entry until they
leave the dormitory organization on marriage, but taking among
their fellows the precedence of their boy-mates in the dormitory.
In Padalibhum the head boy of the dormitory is always known as
[171] the *leyur-gaita*, and below him the *gotul* officials are the *leyur-majhi*,
the *silledar*, the *jaliarsi*, the *laharu*, the *baiddar* and the *kamdar*;
of these, *silledar*, *baiddar* and *kamdar* are Hindi terms copied from
the titles of State or zamindari servants; in many a Muria dormitory
all the office-holders have such designations instead of the old
native names. Besides these names or designations to which
[551] special duties and privileges are attached, they have for the boys
the names Jalka, Jolsai and Joria, and probably others. The girls'
dormitory names ascertained were Jaliaru, Lahari, Manjaro,
Nircsa, Jhelo, Gujaro, Piyosa and Belosa. At a camp at Partabpur
attended by Hill Marias from Padalibhum, the *leyur-gaita* of three

village dormitories were present. All were Padali by clan from 857
Padali villages. Their dormitory mates were respectively Lahari,
a Nuroti girl, Jaliaru, an Usendi girl, and Nirosa, a Nuroti girl; 571
and despite their different designations, these girls were the head- 864
girls of their villages in virtue of their boys' ranks. Another Usendi village in Padalibhum called its head boy Silledar, and his mate was Jhelo, a Padali girl. All four stated freely that they expected ultimately to marry their mates, and that they and all the other dormitory boys often had sexual intercourse with their girls.

The dormitory in these *parganas*, as among the neighbouring 857
Murias, is really a school for training the youth of both sexes in
conjugal and social duties and in the lore of the clan; the dormitory 861
office-bearers are practically prefects and monitors. The headman
and other elders of the villages frequently call on the head-boy for 858
the help of his boys and girls in field-work; but here they are not paid wages, as among the Murias, but are only fed by those for whom they are working. They are also asked to help in thatching houses and building granaries. In weddings the girls are expected to sing, and boys to collect fuel and leaves for cups, and both have to dance; they have similar functions at the various new-eating festivals. The head-boy imposes fines for unjustifiable absence from the dormitory, or from weddings and festivals, or general disobedience of his orders or those of other office-bearers, a bottle of *mahua* spirit being the usual penalty, the cost of which falls upon the parents. The head-boy's mate has similar powers of fining other girls. At the nightly meetings of boys and girls at the dormitory there are dancing in season, tale-telling, singing and games, and from an early age boys are given practical lessons in sexual intercourse. ^a

B. *Bison-horn Marias*

The information which I was able to collect on this subject 843
among the Bison-horn Marias is much less full than that given above for the Hill Marias, and needs further testing and considerable supplementing.

During pregnancy the mother carries on her ordinary work. The only note which I have of any disability attaching to pregnancy is that when the flesh of animals slain in the *weta* ceremonial hunts is divided up and eaten, no share may be given to the husband of a wife who either is pregnant or has her monthly period. In most Bison-horn villages there is no menstruation hut, and in their houses there is no menstruation room. A few villages near the foot of the Abujhmar hills have a hut where young girls are

^a [see cat. 116, pp. 425-426. -Analyst]

843 secluded for their first menstruation, known as the *piki-kurma-lon*;
but generally speaking, Bison-horn Marias do not seem to hold in
the same strength the Hill Maria fear of a woman in this condition.

844 For the birth of a child a separate hut or booth is erected in the
compound, generally at the back of the house, known as the
er-nihitana-lon, or water-washing hut. This is often little more
than the roughest of booths, and considerably inferior to even
a Bison-horn Maria pigsty. Here the mother remains for a full
month, during which her husband is not allowed to go to his work.
The delivery is assisted by an experienced woman relative or
fellow-villager, who cuts and binds the navel-cord and washes the
child immediately after it is born, and gives it to the mother to
suckle. No food is given to the mother that day; on the next
[824] morning she is made to drink a decoction of the bark of the *kusum*
tree (*Schleichera trijuga*), the root of the dwarf *chhind* palm (*Phoenix
sylvestris*), and *kulthi* (*Dolichos biflorus*) pulses, pounded to a powder
and boiled together, and an hour or two after this dose she is given
a meal of warm boiled rice. She is dosed and fed in this way for
six or seven days more, until the navel-cord falls off; and then she
washes her whole body and is allowed to eat regular meals. At the
852 end of the month the *lon-wa'ina* or Returning to the House ceremony
takes place. The child is named with the aid of a medium, though
553 actually names seem to be given for reasons very similar to those
actuating Hill Maria choice of names. A pig, a goat or a number
of cocks are killed, and the mother, having washed her clothes and
her body, cooks the flesh, all the villagers and relatives being
entertained to dinner. Thenceforward the mother is free to resume
all her normal household and field work, and the father can resume
his work.

I once witnessed an unusual naming ceremony. A son had
553 been born after three elder brothers had died. It was considered
789 that their deaths had been due to the hostility of some demon or of
the familiar spirit of some magician, and on the medium's advice
the baby had been suspended in a rough cradle over the rubbish-heap
by the fence of the *bari* garden, and all the men present threw
cow-dung and filth all round the cradle, shouting out '*Kacharu*' or
'Filth!', which name was given to the child in the hope that
thereby the malignant power would be deceived into thinking that
the parents set no value on the child.

Children are breast-fed for two years or more, as among the
862 Hill Marias. It has been already recorded (page 219) that there is
among the Bison-horn Marias a special weaning ceremony during
the Jata Pandum at which the first solid food given to the children
is a portion of the rice and meat offered to the Departed.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

CHAPTER XVI

DEATH AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES

A. *Hill Marias*

THE ordinary rule throughout the Abujhmar hills is to cremate the 764 bodies of headmen and elders of influence and standing and of their 766 wives, and to bury all others.

Except on the southern fringes of the hills, where the villages are influenced by contact with their Bison-horn Maria neighbours, the Hill Marias do not follow the Bison-horn custom of beating a drum from the roof of the house, which Russell and Hiralal predicate of all Marias. The custom is creeping into the hills from south of the Indrawati, and has for example already reached the Kutru Hill Maria villages of Lakka (Lanka) and Karangal; but there it is reserved for men of higher status. The drum used is the [534] hill *turam* kettle-drum, and is usually one of those kept in the village dormitory; the village lads beat it continuously day and night from the death till the burial or cremation of the body.

News of the death is sent out to all the brother-clan and wife- 764 clan relatives and friends of the deceased. The funeral is postponed for two or three days, to give them time to assemble. Then all the 763 women gather in and around the house where the body is lying. A man is never left to die on a cot, but is lifted on to the ground as his end draws near; they say that their reason for this custom is simply that they do not want the dying man to fall off the cot in a last convulsion. Women are never allowed to sleep on a cot. They close the eyes of the corpse, and lift it on to a rough wickerwork bier, covering it over with a length of cloth. It is burned or buried with the clothes and jewellery that were on it at death. The women sit around the corpse and outside in the street, and break into loud keening for the dead.

For the last rites the body is not washed or otherwise prepared, 764 but is left just as it was composed after death. Friends and relatives carry it out on the bier, the only person for whom it is taboo to touch or carry a body being the *waddai* clan-priest medium and his medium assistant (*leshi*). The bier heads the procession to the burial and cremation ground, and is followed by the remaining relatives and friends, the women still keening and beating their breasts.

764 Both for burial and for cremation most Hill Marias place the body in the grave or on the pyre with the head, face upwards, towards the sunrise and the feet towards the sunset; the Usendi clan, however, reverses this.

When the death is obviously a natural death after a long life,
761 and there can be no suspicion of magic, nothing is done at the
funeral to ascertain the cause of death. But if, for example, a
764 man or woman dies suddenly in the prime of life for no
apparent reason, the bearers halt on the path just by the funeral ground, and stand with the bier resting on their shoulders. The *waddai* takes seven *saja* leaves, and places them in a row on the ground a few paces away from the bier. One leaf represents the Earth or Bhum, and stands for death through the displeasure of the Village Mother; the second stands for death through sickness; the third for death through the displeasure of the clan-god and the Departed (*pen-kanal*); the fourth for death through the magic of a fellow-villager; the fifth for death from the magic of a man whose enmity has been aroused against the deceased by a quarrel or exchange of abuses; the sixth for death from the magic of a *waddai* or magician; and the seventh for death from natural causes. The *waddai* or, if he is not present, the *kasyeq-gaita* or the *gaita*, strikes the earth three times with an axe, and calls on the corpse to disclose the cause of its death. The corpse is then believed to impel the bearers to carry it to one of the leaves and stand on it; or else the *waddai* first excites the corpse by scattering husked grain over it till it moves the bearers to one of the leaves. The bearers then leap eight or nine paces away from the leaf, and stand with their backs to the row of leaves. They must not look behind them while the *waddai* changes the order of the leaves, after which the corpse has again to impel its bearers to stand on one of the leaves. Three or four times in all the process is repeated, the leaves being rearranged each time behind the backs of the bearers; and if each time the corpse indicates the same leaf, despite its changes of position, the company is satisfied that it has truly revealed the cause of its death. If in successive tests it indicates different leaves, they assume that there was nothing wrong with the death. In old days the elders stated that if the corpse indicated magic as the cause, the *waddai* at once called on it to point out the magician among those present at the funeral, or in the dead man's village or an adjacent village; but nowadays they do not proceed to an immediate witch-hunt; a seed of suspicion has, however, been sown which will sooner or later grow into assault or murder.

764 Then, if the body is to be buried, the bearers bring it to the grave, which is dug only waist-deep, lift it off the bier and place it in

the grave, with its face upwards, and, normally, its feet towards the sunset. The senior near kinsman present then throws a clod of earth on the head of the corpse, and says, 'This is all I can now do for you, and I give you my portion.' Then each near kinsman present flings a clod into the grave, uttering the same formula, followed by five elders of the village, who therefore are distant kinsmen, and after them by any affines who may be present. If there are no near kinsmen present, the five village elders take the lead in the ceremony. The women take no part in this. The dead man's *erramtogh* (that is, his wife's elder brother or his own younger sister's husband) will have brought to the grave the dead man's spare clothes, if any, his ornaments, his axe (but not his bow and arrows), his hoe (*gudari*), his cot and his dancing clothes and ornaments; generally all or some of his cooking pots are also taken to the grave. It may be added that the *erramtogh* has the duty, when he arrives, of uncovering the body and inspecting it for any signs of foul play. When a woman dies, it is still her husband's *erramtogh*, generally her elder brother, who performs these offices. The property thus brought to the grave is either buried with the body or hung up on *saja* trees over or near the grave, or on the fence or *hanal-gutta* posts erected around or in front of the grave. When the men present have dropped their clods on the body, the earth is shovelled into the grave from all sides, and heaped well over it. Over the mound thus made, leaves are spread, and over them logs are piled. Burial or cremation always takes place in the evening, it being the rule not to bring the body out of the house till about 4 p.m. The grave is dug, or the pyre made ready, as the case may be, about four or five hours beforehand, and the keening of the women begins in the early morning and lasts till the body reaches the funeral ground.

While some men are digging the grave, others cut posts of *saja* wood in the forest hard by, clear them of bark, and roughly carve them with their axes and knives in the manner shown in the bottom illustration of Plate XX, often carving at the top of the posts rude representations of peacocks. On the Kutru side of the hills the rule is to set up two large posts of this kind in front of the grave, and a smaller and much plainer post at the four corners of the grave. The posts are called *hanal-gutta*. As soon as the grave has been completed, these posts are set up, and the *erramtogh* of a dead man or the brother of a dead woman, makes at the foot of one of the two large front posts a small stone cromlech, known as *hanal-garya* (throne of the departed), pours a little *mahua* spirit on the ground by the foot of each post and on the table-stone of the cromlech, on the latter of which he also strews a little husked grain. He takes

764 then a small chick, twists its neck, breaking the skin of its throat with his nails, sprinkles its blood on the rice, and leaves it there. He then ties a piece of cloth brought from his own house to the boughs of a *saja* tree overhanging the grave, and other pieces handed to him by relatives and friends who wish to honour the dead man, as well as strips of the dead man's clothes brought from his house. Next he, and after him the other affines of the dead man in turn, or, if a married woman has been buried, her father's kindred, take a leaf-cupful of *mahua* spirit, pouring a drop on the grave as an offering to the dead person, and after them the kinsmen of the dead do likewise. The *erramtogh* also offers the *hanal* little *bediya*[1] baskets of rice and *kutki*, and an empty miniature *handi* (pot). The kinsmen of the dead man have to provide the *mahua* spirit and the grain, baskets and pot. Finally the grave, except the two front *hanal-gutta* posts, is generally surrounded with a fence of criss-crossed strips of bamboo.

766 For a cremation the procedure is much the same. The pyre is made ready beforehand, like the grave, and the body is laid on it. The *erramtogh* brings a burning log from the hearth of the dead man's house, and with it kindles the pyre; and then the kinsmen, the five village elders, and the affines each place a small piece of wood on the head of the corpse, uttering the same formula as when they throw clods of earth on a body in a grave. The pyre is almost always made at the foot of a *mahua* tree. They pile no leaves or logs over the ashes, but leave them there to the mercy of the elements, after fencing them, setting up *hanal-gutta* posts and a *hanal-garya* cromlech, and tying strips of cloth to overhanging *saja* boughs.

764 The ritual varies in different parts of the hills. In some tracts, particularly near Orcha and on the Narainpur side of the hills, they set up only one *hanal-gutta* post, in front of the grave, or none at all. The *mahua* spirit ritual also varies. After earth leaves and logs have been piled over the grave, and the *hanal-gutta* post and the cromlech, if any, have been set up, the *erramtogh* takes a leaf-cupful of liquor, pours a drop or two from it on the earth and logs piled above the head of the corpse, and drinks what remains; this is done after him in turn by the male affines, the kinsmen, and the women present.

The dead man's cot or sleeping-mat and the bier on which his body was carried to the funeral are always left by the grave; and often his dancing head-dress is deposited on the top of one of the *hanal-gutta* posts, while the grave is further adorned with his old fishing-rods and wooden representations of spears and axes. The bottom illustration on Plate XX shows a typical burial grave in

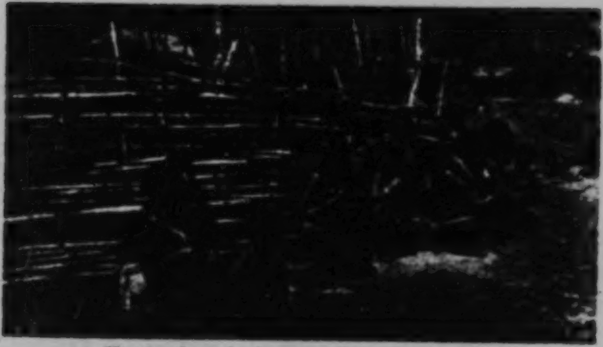
---

[1] See page 175 above.

PLATE XX

764

Mourning over a corpse, Handawada
(*Photograph by Baron E. von Eickstedt*)



Keening for a dead woman, Bhera Tondawada

Burial grave at Nugur, Kutru Mar
HILL MARIA DEATH CEREMONIES

[face p. [illegible]

764 the village of Nugur, with the cromlech in front of the two large *kanal-gutta* posts and behind them two of the small corner *kanal-gutta* posts and the log- and leaf-piled grave. At a cremation grave seen at Handawada, where the ashes of the pyre were still fresh, there was no *kanal-gutta* or cromlech, and the only offering to the dead visible was a small basket that contained the funerary grain, fixed at the top of the fence erected round the grave. The usual strips of cloth were hung from the boughs of trees overhead. The wicker-work frames of dancing shields were also suspended from the fence, although, as related on page 76 above, the use of these dancing shields has for the time been abandoned. The Nugur photograph on Plate XX shows dancing head-dresses on top of the two large *kanal-gutta* posts, a large imitation spear of bamboo between them, and strips of cloth hanging from long bamboo saplings planted in the ground, as there were no reasonably low overhanging boughs. The two upper photographs on the plate show women mourners around a sheeted body in a house at Handawada, and keeners outside a house at Bhera Tondawada at noon before a funeral.

Immediately after the actual funeral in many parts of the hills all the mourners proceed from the funeral ground to a spot by the side of one of the paths entering the village. There the *erramtogh* or the next nearest affine relative present builds a small cairn from 1½ to 2½ feet high, surmounted by a flat cap-stone; the cairn is known as a *marma-kal* or *marman-gal*. On the cap-stone he and each of the householders present places a pinch of rice or *kuthi* grain, addresses the dead man by name, and tells him that he gives him this food to eat. All then go home. In the Tapalibhum, Behramar and Sonpur Mar *parganas* the dead man's heir or *jiya-bital* sets up this cairn on the path a little way from the burial or cremation ground. At the selected spot he clears the ground, places a little grain on it, and makes a small chicken peck at the grain; he then cuts its throat behind his back with a knife, the *erramtogh* or some other near affine places a large flat stone at the side of the dead chicken, and the heir piles stones over it. No words are uttered while this is done. Here they call the cairn *korq-kotikhtana-kal*, or 'chicken-feeding stone', and do not know the term *marma-kal*. In the Farsal, Bardal, Tulagotal, Hukkagotal and Farsigotal *parganas* they apply the term *marma-kal* to a small stone set up by the side of the path leading from the village to the *kotokal* row of menhirs for the dead as a temporary consolation for the departed when the heir has not sufficient grain or money to erect a menhir immediately after the funeral.

765 Mourning is observed for four days after the funeral, and it is taboo for the heir and the men of the deceased's family to go to

765 work in this period. Often a house or a portion of a house in which
a death has occurred is shut up and not re-occupied. It is, however,
not repaired. So long as it stands, it is regarded as a memorial of
the dead. On the day after the funeral, if the house is still to be
occupied, the rooms and the surroundings are cleaned out, and the
floors are re-plastered. On the first three mornings after the
[769] funeral they place a little meal from the Pot of the Departed on
the grave as an offering. At the end of the period of mourning
764 the heir, if rich enough, should proceed at once to set up a menhir
to the dead in the *kotokal*, in the *parganas* and villages where these
menhirs are still erected. If, however, he cannot yet afford to do
so, he goes to the graveside, bows before the *hanal-garya* cromlech,
tells the dead man's *hanal* that he is sorry that he cannot yet afford
to erect his stone, and begs him to be patient, to forgive him for
the delay and not to harass him. It may take him two or three
years to collect the necessary grain and money for feeding those
who are to help him to find and erect a suitable menhir. In many
parts of the hills the custom has fallen into disuse, because of its
cost. But it is still common on the Kutru side of the hills, in
Tulagotal, Hukkagotal, Farsigotal, Farsal, Bardal, Tapalibhum,
Padalibhum, Nurbhum, Behramar and Sonpur *parganas*, and also
prevails in Dugal and other neighbouring Jhoria Muria *parganas*.
In Chhota Dongar *pargana* few clans now erect either *marma-kal*
or *kotokal* stones, though in many villages old rows of *kotokal*
menhirs attest the former prevalence of the practice; the Bokalur
are almost the only clan there who still erect them. From Adeq
in that *pargana* rows of menhirs will be met by the traveller at
Itulnar in Bhairamgarh Mar, between Itulnar and Hikul in Barsur
Mar, and at Toinar and other villages in the latter *pargana*; but
the clans now occupying these areas do not erect menhirs, and say
that the rows still standing were erected ages ago by clans no longer
known, though the Gumelor attribute the menhirs in their village
of Toinar to the long extinct Timor clan. The Tamor of Tumirgunda
between Handawada and the Indrawati have a *kotokal* on the hill
path to Hirameta, but have erected no new menhir there for years,
and say that nowadays no stone is set up till three generations have
elapsed after death; they admit that this is practically a confession
that the practice has been abandoned, and say that it was found to
be too expensive.

When, however, the heir has enough grain and money to pay for the food and drink needed for the erection of a menhir, whether on the fourth day after death, or after the lapse of some months or years, he calls together his relatives and friends, and all go off into the forest to look for a suitable stone. The only consideration

guiding their choice is the adequacy of their resources to provide 764
food and drink for the men required to drag or carry the stone.
The menhirs in the Abujhmar country and the adjacent Muria tracts
are considerably smaller than the vast menhirs sometimes met in
the Bison-horn country; the largest that I have seen, at Lakka in
Kutru Mar, were just over 8 feet high, and about 2½ feet wide by
10 inches thick at the base. They drag out the selected stone from 764
its resting-place, and place under it several cross-pieces of wood,
and on each side of it a long thick pole, to which the cross-pieces 483
are lashed. The stone is then lashed to the cross-pieces, and the
poles are lifted on to the shoulders of the bearers, from twenty to
thirty in number, and so the journey to the *kotokal* begins. At
intervals they stop, and are given by the heir drinks of *mahua* spirit,
which is considered to give them strength to bear the burden; and
they are given at least one meal on the way. There will also be
reserves of bearers, who carry the food and drink and cooking pots,
to be entertained. So they ultimately reach the *kotokal* and 764
deposit the stone on the ground at the appointed spot. If it is too
late to erect it that evening, a feast follows at the heir's house, and
all night the men and women dance with their wife-clan (*akomama*)
relatives. In the following afternoon the stone is erected under
the supervision of the *erramtogh* or the senior wife-clan relative
present. A hole is dug in the ground at one end of the stone and
then the stone, if small, is pulled upright by willing hands and held
there while the earth is shovelled in. If it is large and heavy, ropes
are lashed round the far end and used to pull it upright, with its
base in the hole, and ten men or so hold poles on both sides of its
apex to prevent it falling over, while others ram small stones, earth
and turves around its base. In Kutru Mar, Chhota Dongar Mar,
Behramar, Tapalibhum and Sonpur Mar a *hanal-garya* cromlech is
then made at the base of the menhir, and the heir of the dead man
comes up to it, and squats on the ground with his back to the
menhir and the cromlech. He takes an eight or nine days old
chicken, and, holding it behind his back and never looking at the
stone, cuts its throat with the nails of his hand, sprinkles its blood
on the table-stone of the cromlech, and pushes its body under the
table-stone; next he places an offering of rice or *kutki* grain on [764]
the table-stone. As he makes the offerings he speaks to the dead
man, saying, 'Whether you were killed by magic, or by the wrath
of the clan-god and the Departed, or died naturally, I know not.
But now I have put up this menhir for you, and you must wander
no more. Stay here in peace for ever, and do not worry us your
descendants.' In Tapalibhum and Behramar they erect the stone
and sacrifice the chicken in silence. Only the heir has to keep his

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32

Hill Maria

764 back to the menhir; all others present may watch the whole proceedings. In Padalibhum and parts of Nurbhum they do not sacrifice a chicken, but only place an offering of grain on the cromlech. In Farsal, Bardal and the three Gotal *parganas* they then usually kill a boar a few yards away from the menhir, stretching it out on its stomach, two men holding it down with a pole across its neck, while a third man kills it with blows from the blunt side of the axe-head. They boil and eat the pork there, men, women and children, but give no part of it to the *hanal* and do not even hang its tail over the top of the menhir. In these *parganas* they assert that they have given up sacrificing a cow after the erection of the menhir; but I should be surprised if this assertion were strictly true. A similar claim was made by the Padali headmen of Padalibhum, but Bardal Gille, the headman of Rawan in that *pargana*, stated that some clans still offered a cow and hung its tail from the menhir. There is still a fear of offending Hindu State officials by frankly admitting the slaughter of cows. Cow sacrifice is further limited by the comparative scarcity of cattle in many parts of the Abujhmar hills, whereas pigs are plentiful. Even where they assert that they no longer sacrifice cows they do not scruple to eat the flesh of a cow that has died a natural death or been killed by a tiger.

In Kutru Mar they do not erect stones brought to the *kotokal* for women and children, but leave them flat on the ground. The stones for women and children, whether erected or prone, are always smaller than those erected for men. There is a general belief that menhirs increase or decrease in size according as the *hanal* is satisfied or not.^

769 After the chicken and grain have been offered on the cromlech at the foot of the menhir, the heir, still turning his back on the menhir, goes off at once to the nearest pool of water, followed by the others present, and all wash their arms and legs and return to the village. Where cow sacrifice is still in vogue, as in Tapalibhum, Behramar and Sonpur Mar *parganas*, the *erramtogh* then sacrifices a cow or a pig or both, generally in the *lonu* room of the heir's house before the Pot of the Departed, using the blunt side of the axe-head, saying to the dead man, '*Niwa naode mat haukin torun. Idek mak suk-duk kemeh manu*', or, 'I sacrifice this in your name; hereafter keep still and do not make trouble for us!' The tuft at the end of the cow's tail is fastened to a loop of cord, and hung over the apex of the menhir just erected. The heir then entertains all who have assembled to a second dinner, off the sacrificed beef and pork, and the night ends in dancing and liquor. Needless to say, this procedure is costly, and many a *hanal* has to rest content with a *marma-kal* cairn.

^[see cat. 116, p. 423. -Analyst]

Where, as in Orcha and most of the surrounding villages of the Chhota Dongar *pargana*, *kotokal* menhirs are no longer erected, a cow or pig is nevertheless sacrificed in this way in the village on the night after the funeral at the heir's house, and portions of the flesh or the liver when cooked are placed under the cromlech at the base of the *hanal-gutta* post, or, if there is no cromlech, on the grave, while the tail, and sometimes also a lower leg, from hock to hoof, are fastened by a cord from an overhanging *saja* bough. The usual feast and dance then follow. 769

One reason for the abandonment of the custom of erecting menhirs may be that the clans which have abandoned it have in fairly recent times abandoned their traditional for their present clan-areas; for it was the rule that the menhir should always be erected in the village from which the dead man or his ancestors had originally come, not in the village at which he was living at the time of his death. 178 764

Treatment of abnormal deaths

A person who has killed himself, or who dies from cholera or small-pox, is not buried or cremated at the regular funeral ground, but in the forest at some distance from it. There had been no recent case in any village which I visited of a woman dying when pregnant or in child-birth, and no one could say what would be done in such a case. Persons killed by tigers or other wild animals must be burned, not buried, at the place where their remains are found, or to which they are brought for the inquest. They must never be brought into a village, for otherwise the dead man's *hanal* may bring the tiger there. The remains, if scattered, are collected and placed in a cloth brought from the dead man's house; but such bodies should be touched as little as possible. Logs are piled under the body where it lies and kindled, and anything found with the body or at the place where the tiger attacked the dead man is burnt with it; but no dancing dresses or other property are brought from his house to be burned with him, and no offerings of grain or *mahua* spirit are made at the grave. No *marma-kal* cairn and no *kotokal* menhir are set up for him; but there is nothing to prevent this being done for the victims of cholera or smallpox. 766

B. Bison-horn Marias

The true Bison-horn Marias, as distinguished from members of clans once Hill Maria in culture but now adopting Bison-horn customs, cremate all their dead except those who die from abnormal causes. 764 When a man dies, his son-in-law is sent for, and on arrival climbs on to the roof of the house with a *dol* drum, which he beats 763

763 for some time with a series of one long followed by two short beats to announce that a death has occurred in the house; he then climbs down, and continues this drumming on the ground until the relatives and friends of the dead man assemble, or until the body is taken out to be cremated. Sometimes they fire guns at intervals for the same purpose. Messengers are sent out to neighbouring villages to bid relatives to the funeral.

764 When all the men and women have assembled the body is taken out of the house and washed with a pot of water and anointed with a mixture of ground turmeric and oil. They then spread a cloth on a bier of bamboo wicker-work, lay the body on it, and spread a cloth over it. Each male relative who can afford it brings a cloth and similarly spreads it over the body. Four men then carry the bier on their shoulders to the cremation ground, followed by all the [533] mourners, and men beating the dactylic funeral drum-beat. The pyre is made there, the body laid on it with head to the east and feet to the west, and covered over with fuel. Two men, generally two sons, or two sons-in-law, or a son and a son-in-law, then kindle the pyre at the head and the feet of the body respectively. As soon as the pyre is blazing fiercely the company leaves the cremation ground and returns to the dead man's house for food. The cremation ground is almost always on the side of the path or road opposite to the row of menhirs erected to commemorate the dead, which is known to the Bison-horn Marias as *urashal*.

[787 761] On the next day all go to the cremation ground to see whether the body has been completely reduced to ashes; if any portion remains unburnt, it is a sign that the death was due to the magic of some enemy. All condole with the members of the bereaved family and return to their houses.

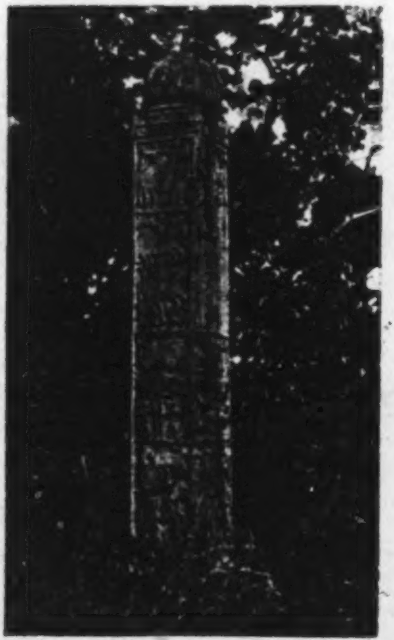
On the next Saturday morning comes the erection of the *urashal* menhir. There are *urashal* with great numbers of menhirs almost everywhere in the Bison-horn country, and in most parts villagers continue to erect them for men, women and children whenever a death occurs.[a] On the Jagdalpur side, however, and [178] around Paknar, though every village has its *urashal*, new menhirs are seldom set up in these days, the reason given being always that the ceremony is too expensive. It is indeed expensive, for if properly done it involves the killing of at least one, and possibly two cows, a pig or two, and the provision of three or four *khandi* of 764 grain—*kutki*, *urad*, *mung* and rice—and an adequate supply of *mahua* spirit and *landa*. But expense is not taken into account at 177 weddings, where open house is kept for a thousand guests if need be. 554 The real reason is that these Bison-horn Marias are in close contact with Hinduism with its veneration of the cow; and as they raise

[a] [See cat. 116, p. 426. — Analyst]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

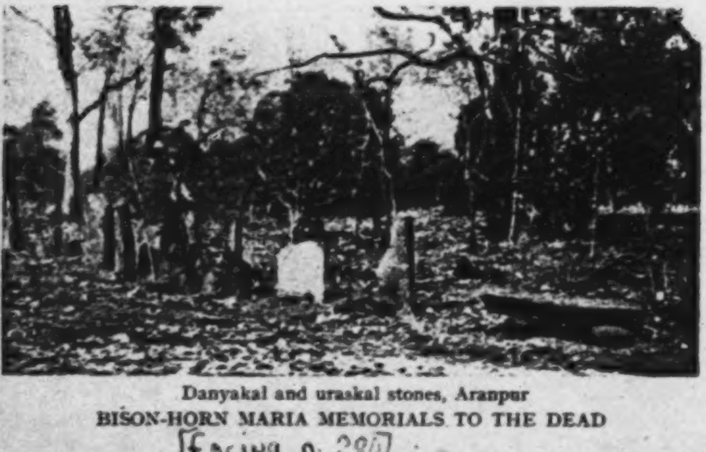
Bison Horn Maria

764
532



Urasgatta post, near Chitrakot Falls

764



Danyakal and uraskal stones, Aranpur

BISON-HORN MARIA MEMORIALS TO THE DEAD

[facing p. 280]

714 themselves socially they not only cease to follow old Maria customs, but begin to resent being called Marias and to claim the designation [177 of Muria. In some places, especially in villages where it is hard to 554] find suitable menhir stones, they erect in their stead posts of *saja* wood, which they call *urasgatta*. The upper illustration on plate XXI shows a very elaborate *urasgatta* from a roadside village near the Chitrakot falls, on the northernmost fringe of the Bison-horn [532] country. It is carved on each of its carefully squared sides with representations of hunting scenes, and the objects of the chase. Originally these were picked out in red and blue paint. Plate XXII shows part of a large row of *uraskal* menhirs by the side of the road from Dantewara to Kameli, at the foot of the bridle-path ascending to the Bailadila guest-house; such enormous menhirs as those shown behind the women in this illustration are seldom set up in these days; the tallest shown was thirteen feet high, and the broadest over six feet wide at the base. The normal size of those nowadays erected is shown in the lower illustration on plate XXI; this portrays part of the *uraskal* of Aranpur village, by the side of the forest road from Kuakonda to Dummagudem, and at the head of the Aranpur pass. In this photograph the interesting thing is the large flat stone resting on four boulders.[a] This is known as a *danya-kal*, and was placed there as the memorial of Birya-Marvi Hurra Wadde, who in his life-time was *perma* and *bhum-gaita* of Aranpur, as well as a *wadde*. The Birya-Marvi and the Kuhrami clans are the only two which always make *danyakal* and never set up *uraskal* stones; all the other clans, even in the Marvi and Kuhrami phratries, and including the small or Chudala Marvi clan, erect *uraskal* stones. This Aranpur *uraskal* was not restricted to the Birya-Marvi clan, although the village was founded by that clan; the *danyakal* stone on the right edge of the photograph was the last stone at the south end of the row; next to it on the north were fifteen *uraskal* stones of the Kunjami clan, and after them three of the Chudala Marvi clan. The small stones at the foot of the menhirs are known as *kanal-kutul* or ghost stools, and serve the same function as the *kanal-garya* cromlechs of the Hill Marias. Any recently erected stone can usually be detected either by the presence of a cow's or pig's tail hung over its apex by a loop of cord, or by the dirty white stains of libations of *landa* poured over the stone when it was set up.

316 The stone is selected and carried from the quarry to the place where it is to be erected in much the same way as that already described for the Hill Marias. I use the word quarry advisedly, for these great slabs or pillars cannot be found as surface boulders. I have not seen the actual quarrying; but they understand how to

[a] [See vol. 116, pp. 426-427. — Analyst]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

316 crack boulders by burning piles of logs on and around them, and
use their iron digging-sticks as crowbars to assist the work. The
[883] stones are too heavy to be carried merely by the ends of the two
long poles to which the Hill Maria lashes the short cross-pieces of
wood on which the stone rests; the Bison-horn cross-pieces project
beyond the stone, and on the ends they attach long loops of twisted
bamboo rind, through the upper ends of which they pass cross-poles
over the top of the stone, and the ends of these cross-poles, like
those of the two long poles, are borne on the bearers' shoulders.
764 The heir of the dead man has to provide food and drink for the bearers, as in the Abujhmar hills. The stone is taken to the place where it is to be set up, and the heir sacrifices a cock on the other side of the road on the spot where the body was cremated, and buries it in a hole dug under the ashes.

All proceed thence to the dead man's house, and there in the *wijja-lon* by the Pot of the Departed the heir sacrifices another cock to the dead man. The latter's son-in-law, or, if there is none, his *erramtogh* or some other affine, in the name of the dead man kills, with blows from the blunt head of an axe on its head, the cow or cows selected by the dead man during his lifetime; they believe that if these cows are not sacrificed in fulfilment of his wishes they pine away and die, and then the dead man is said to have come and fetched them away.[a] Pigs are sometimes sacrificed as a substitute for or in addition to cows. The sacrificed animals are then skinned and cut up for roasting, the liver being cooked separately for the dead man. They take the liver, the tails tied to loops of cord, and a pot of *landa* to the *uraskal*, and there the affines of the dead man see to the erection of the stone. The heir hangs the tails over the top of the stone, after pouring *landa* over it, and sometimes milk also. He then places the roasted liver on the *hanal-kutul* cromlech, and with his back turned to the menhir sacrifices a chicken and places it under the cromlech, in much the same way as the Hill Maria heir. All present fling rice, *kutki*, *urad* and *mung* at and around the menhir, and then follow the heir to the nearest pool to bathe, without looking back at the menhir. They eat the roast beef and pork of the sacrificial victims either on the banks of the pool or at the dead man's house, with boiled rice and pulses, and *landa* and *mahua* spirit to drink. The son-in-law or other affine who beat the funeral drum is presented by the heir with a brass dish and a piece of cloth, or, more often, with the cloth only. All then disperse.

At the first Marka Pandum following this, a final offering of mangoes and grain is made to the dead man's *hanal* at his *uraskal*.

In some villages a forked bough is erected instead of an *uraskal* or an *urasgatta*. It is always cut from the sacred *saja* tree.

[a] [see cat. 116, p. 427. —Armbrust]

1:Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

764

PLATE XXII

Uraskal stones on Dantewara-Bailadila road
(Photograph by Baron E. von Eickstedt)

[*face p. 282*

[facing p. 282]

766 At Paknar in May 1930 I tried the murderer of a man whose body had been taken to Jagdalpur by the police for *post mortem* examination and had been buried there. In the course of the trial I visited the spot where the accused had shot him dead with a bow and arrow as he and the villagers helping him were carrying his *kutki* harvest from his *penda* field to his granary. His kinsmen had performed funeral rites for him there, sacrificing, roasting and eating two cocks and a pig, hanging up the loin-cloth which he was wearing when killed, and which they had brought back from Jagdalpur, and throwing rice and other grains at the trunk of the tree. They had also thrown away there all the earthen pots in his house except the Pot of the Departed, and his wife had burnt her bangles there. They had poured a libation of *mahua* spirit on the ground at the foot of the tree, which had been stained by his blood, and had adjured his *hanal* to be contented with this, stay with the *hanal* of the other Departed and bring no trouble upon them. A little *mahua* seed oil had then been added in his name to the Pot of the Departed in the *wijja-lon* of his house.

Abnormal deaths

Often when a person is murdered or drowned or dies in any unnatural way, a great cairn of stones is erected over his remains at the spot where he died, known as a *punji-paknar* in Halbi, and any passer-by is supposed to pick up a stone and fling it on the top of the cairn. The custom is common to all the peoples of Bastar, [674] including the Hill Marias; in 1913 two Hill Marias murdered a Maria Lohar girl, with whom both had often cohabited, through fear of the disgrace one of them would incur if the child which she had conceived were born and she named him as the father. The village elders hushed up the murder, and removed the body to the head of a pass crossing the Tiralgarh hills, and there a huge *punji-paknar* was piled over the remains.

Victims of small-pox and women dying in pregnancy or child-birth are buried by Bison-horn Marias, but not in the regular cremation ground. Before these women can be buried, a *wadde* or *gunia* has to shut up her malignant spirit by driving iron nails into her knees and elbows. But *uraskal* menhirs are erected for them and for victims of small-pox. Persons killed by lightning are cremated at some distance from the ordinary cremation ground, and no menhir may be erected for them. Menhirs are also forbidden for persons killed by tigers, whose remains are burned in the forest where they are found, with whatever possessions were with them when attacked or killed. A dummy tiger is made of bamboo sticks, taken to the boundary of the village, and there burnt.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

CHAPTER XVII

VILLAGE, CLAN AND PARGANA AUTHORITIES AND PANCHAYATS; THEIR EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY; THEIR JUDICIAL AUTHORITY AND METHODS; PROPERTY AND INHERITANCE; POSITION OF WOMEN; THE RECENT STATE ORDERS RESTORING JUDICIAL AUTHORITY TO PANCHAYATS

623 625 692 ONE of the most remarkable features of the Bastar of 1927 was the extent to which tribal, village and caste *panchayats* still regulated the religious and social life of the people, acted as intermediaries between them and the State and its zamindaris in meeting State demands for taxes, labour and supplies and in protecting the ryots from undue exactions, and exercised much *de facto* criminal and civil jurisdiction. Here ready to hand was the nucleus of an organization which, if properly handled and fostered, could in time save the State much money spent on law and justice, police and general administration. But the opposite policy had consciously or unconsciously been followed. Any exercise of criminal jurisdiction, even in petty crop theft cases, had been regarded as usurpation of the authority of the police and courts, and persons who had already made ample amends under tribal custom were arrested and sentenced all over again by the tahsildars, while headmen and elders not infrequently were punished for not reporting the offences. A badly trained police, often singularly lacking in common sense, would descend on a village and waste days in pointless investigation of petty cases, expecting not only to be fed on rice, mutton and poultry by the villagers during their stay, but also to be provided with stores of grain under the old *bisaha* system to take away with them at the end of the investigation. Villagers would be compelled to carry the supplies thus forcibly taken from them to the police station, perhaps two or three days' march distant, and would rarely be given even the nominal payment prescribed under the old *bisaha* rules. Then would follow a protracted trial at the still more distant tahsil headquarters, ten witnesses being summoned where three or four would have been ample; and probably all these witnesses at the end of the trial would have to accompany the police party back to the police station to carry their impedimenta, and might be kept even longer as '*athpaharia begar*' labourers to clean the police office and lines and do domestic work for the constables.

The civil matters ordinarily decided by the *panchayats* would be 623
marriage cases, such as settling the compensation to be awarded 625
to a husband when his wife had eloped with another man. But
tahsildars would entertain complaints under the sections of the 692
Indian Penal Code punishing adultery from a husband dissatisfied
with the *panchayat's* decision, and thereby undermine yet further
the authority of the *panchayat*. I have in an earlier chapter 622
referred to the effect of the unconscionable demands for forced
labour and supplies on the position of the village headmen, and 791
shown how in consequence the tendency was to put forward a
dummy as the headman for secular matters, the real leadership of
the village remaining with the religious headman, that is to say, the
kasyeq-gaita in the case of the Hill Marias, and the *perma* in that of
the Bison-horn Marias, but the dummy being available to bear the
brunt of official wrath, though powerless to effect anything without
the consent of the village elders. Formerly, there seems little
doubt, the *kasyeq-gaita* and the *perma* also discharged the functions
of the secular headman; the differentiation of the two functions
was the result of the State officials' treatment of the aboriginal.
In many Abujhmar villages the functions are still combined, or are
held by members of the same family, because State officials were
always loath to penetrate into the interior of the Hill Maria country.
With the revival of the authority of the headmen and *panchayats*
that is now the policy of the State, it may be expected that gradually
the religious headmen will resume the secular headmanship also.

It is not surprising that, as the result of these methods of 623
dealing with the aboriginals, their *panchayats* tended to co-operate
as little as possible with the State; their object became to conceal 692
crime from the police and in general to comply with State requirements only so far as was necessary in order to avoid trouble, and, above all, visits of subordinate State officials to their villages. The records of murder and other trials show many cases of the village elders meeting and deciding to hush up a crime, especially if it had occurred at harvest or any other busy agricultural season, rather than have the whole life of the village community disorganized by police investigation, committal proceedings and Sessions trial. Such crimes may have come to light later through the *panchayat* reporting them at their own convenience, or through the widow or other relative of a murdered man being dissatisfied with the compensation which the murderer had been ordered to give, while in some *parganas* informers arose who subsequently used their supposed prestige with the police to become petty local tyrants. Conversely on occasions *panchayats*, disgusted with the failure of the police to investigate thefts or with the acquittal of guilty persons by the

623 tahsildars, took the law into their own hands and had the thieves
692 killed.

Purely social matters, breaches of caste or tribal prejudices,
623 were left by the State to the jurisdiction of caste *panchayats* and of
the caste headmen, appointed for nearly all Hindu and semi-Hindu
622 castes in the State by the Ruling Chief in the tahsils and by the
692 zamindars for their own zamindaris; after the first appointment
these offices tended to become hereditary in the family of the person
564 appointed, the succession having to be recognized by the Ruling
Chief, from whom the headmen of leading castes would receive a turban as insignia of office. A register of these headmen is kept, and appeals from their decisions in caste *panchayat* in social matters lie direct to the Ruling Chief, this power during the long minority of the late Maharani of Bastar having been exercised on her behalf by a relative of hers who manages the State temples at Jagdalpur. But the State never appointed caste headmen for Hill or Bison-horn Marias, who retained their own tribal customs in these matters, and whose *panchayats* did not, like those of Hindu castes, deal only with social matters, but also with petty crime and with the administration and agricultural management of the villages and clans, as well as their relations with the officers of the State. To some extent the Murias were in the same position; but in certain areas caste headmen had been appointed for them, and they had learnt to defer to the Palace as the ultimate arbiter in social matters, while great numbers of their villages had been granted to alien lessees who asserted their own authority and belittled that of the traditional headmen and *panchayats*.

A text for the enquiries which I had made into the *panchayats*
622 of the Marias was the following passage from the appendix to the
623 chapter on caste (Chapter IX, p. 239) in Marten's 1911 *Central
Provinces and Berar Census Report*:—
692

> 'The following account of the tribal council of the Maria Gonds of South Chanda has been sent in by the Manager of the Ahiri estate, and is worth quoting almost in full. Every genuine Maria village has a village headman or *patel*, called the *Gaita*. In addition to his office as a *gaita* he generally exercises also the hereditary functions of a *Bhumia* or religious headman of the village. This dual office used formerly to be held as a rule by one and the same man in the village, and, with a few exceptions here and there owing to poverty or loss of influence on the part of the *Bhumia*, it is still so held in the majority of cases. The man enjoying the double office is therefore the patriarch of the whole village community, and his authority in the village (or a group of two or three villages) under him is supreme. This post is hereditary. The caste has not a standing Panchayat or governing body. It is called together when required. But the system prevailing in the caste is far more developed and is in certain respects more far-reaching than the ordinary Panchayat
> 623 system prevailing in other castes. The village *Gaita*, on receiving a report of
> a misdemeanour or other occurrence in the village, calls two or three elders
> 692 of the village together—the number is not fixed, nor is it necessary to call the

642
623
632
642

same man every time—sends for the complainant and the accused, and after hearing the parties decides the case with the help of the village elders, who as a rule agree with his decision.

'The jurisdiction of the village panchayat is confined to the village itself, and a local village panchayat is never referred to for the decision of a case by persons at a distance. A group of about 50 to 100 villages is constituted into what is locally called a *patti*, and this *patti* acknowledges the authority of the chief religious and social headman of the group, who is called the *Sendhia*. The *Sendhia* is the chief priest and judge of the *patti*. Every marriage contracted, every case of social misdemeanour involving the penalty of a fine, and every other social and religious function performed in any village of the *patti* yields the *Sendhia* a fixed fee in cash, ranging from Rs. 2 to Rs. 10, and in some exceptional cases up to Rs. 50. The office of the *Sendhia* is also hereditary, and the *Sendhia* is the dominant authority in the *patti*. The authority of the *Sendhia* (for purposes of a Panchayat) is invoked only in exceptional cases involving the interests of a number of villages, and in such cases the decision of the *Sendhia* on an appeal being made to him by or against a village panchayat (or a number of village panchayats) is final. For purposes of a panchayat therefore each *patti* forms a distinct unit, the internal composition of which is as follows :—

(*a*) Each village holds its own panchayat composed of a few village elders and presided over by the village headman (*gaita*).

(*b*) Each group of villages acknowledges the authority of the *Sendhia*, who is the court of appeal for difficult or intricate intra-communal disputes.

(*c*) Each *Sendhia's patti* is, as a rule, a compact block of country, sharply defined by prominent natural geographical boundaries (a range of hills, a large river or a nullah), and the *Sendhia's* authority is confined to his own *patti*.

The affairs of one *Sendhia's patti* are never referred to a *Sendhia* of another *patti*. Each *patti* is known by its local geographical name (such as the Lahiri *patti*, the Vennasugar *patti*, the Jarawandi *patti*, the Ghat *patti*, and so forth), and each *patti* is the sole undisputed domain of the local *Sendhia*. The only remarkable case of an exception to this general rule that occurred within the memory of living man was during the cold weather of 1909 at the village of Kotmi, which belongs to the Vennasugar *patti*. A Maria's daughter of the village eloped with a Mussalman. The local village panchayat took a feast from the father of the girl, and fined him an amount adequate enough for the dues of the *Sendhia*. The *Sendhia* demanded more and censured the village panchayat for having let the man off with a light amount. The village panchayat considered the *Sendhia's* demands to be exorbitant, and threatened to alienate themselves from him and to invoke the aid of a foreign *Sendhia*. This was too much for the *Sendhia*, who directly excommunicated the whole village panchayat. The panchayat therefore sent for the *Sendhia* of Judt, who naturally refused to affiliate the village to his *patti*, but, seeing the difficulties of the case, agreed to purify the culprit for a small fee, which was paid to him. He performed the necessary ceremonies and reclaimed the unfortunate father of the girl. Thereupon the whole *patti* of Vennasugar rose against the village of Kotmi, and threatened to use violence. This caused some uneasiness to the police, who began sending in reports. The Manager of the Ahiri estate went to the spot, and his camp was immediately besieged by about a hundred *Gaitas* of the *patti*, headed by the *Sendhia*, who clamoured for justice. Their complaint was that the village people of Kotmi had set a bad example, and that the people of the *patti* would know no rest till they (the Kotmi people) got themselves purified by the *Sendhia*. The Marias of Kotmi were, on their part, too obstinate to yield, and with great difficulty the Manager succeeded in effecting a compromise by prevailing upon the *Sendhia* to reduce his demands. He agreed ultimately to give absolution for a nominal amount, which was paid by the girl's father, and thus ended in a merry drinking bout what threatened to be a small civil war. The next

> 632 morning the *Sendhia* repeated the necessary spells, and, collecting together all the *Gaitas* of the *patti* with the Kotmi fellows, sprinkled fresh well water over their heads and declared Kotmi as re-affiliated to his *patti*.
>
> 692 'This specific instance illustrates not only the great power exercised by the *Sendhia* in his *patti* but also the fact that it is impossible for a village to alienate itself from a *patti* or to disregard the authority of a *Sendhia*.'

632 The South Chanda *patti* thus described seems to be very like the clan-*pargana* of the neighbouring Bastar Hill Marias, though much larger, if the figure of from 50 to 100 villages in each *patti* is correct. Actually, however, the *patti* probably includes several clan-areas or, at all events, villages of several clans, though I have not been able to make any enquiries in Chanda. The designation *Sendhia* is used in the Bhopalpatnam zamindari of Bastar for the headmen appointed by past zamindars over the local Naikpod, Kapewar, Barod and Dolod (Pardhan) castes; among Bastar Marias, however, the term appears to be used only in the Kutru Mar *pargana*, of which Arki Burga of Jegur, a village south of the Indrawati, was in 1930 the hereditary *sendhia*. But his sole function was the reclamation of any Maria guilty of a breach of social rules, and he had no other rights or authority, nor was his presence essential in any *panchayat* except one convened to deal with cases of outcasting. He was in no sense a headman of the *pargana*, and had none of the authority of the *sendhia* of Chanda or the *pargania majhi* or headman of the Maria and Muria *parganas* of Antagarh, Kondagaon, Jagdalpur and Dantewara tahsils in Bastar. In fact, there were no *pargana* headmen for the Kutru Mar and Bhairamgarh Mar *parganas* of Kutru zamindari, the *gaita* of the parent or principal village of a clan being the nearest approach to a *pargana* headman; when Arki Burga was asked to become *pargana* headman he refused; the little actual influence he possessed over the Kutru Mar *pargana* was shown by the fact that he had left the *pargana* to live at Jegur. The headmen of the Hill Maria *parganas* of Antagarh tahsil are sometimes called *sethia*.

632 622 In the two Hill Maria *parganas* of Kutru the village *gaita* is often still both religious and secular headman. The clans are small, and their villages not always contiguous. The *gaita* of the parent village may not actually decide all cases from each of the other villages, but he can interfere with the decisions of the *gaita* and elders of the other villages, and the latter often refer cases to him; for the decision of such cases he sits in *panchayat* with the *gaitas* of all the other villages of his clan. Examples of these small clan groups are the Gumelor villages of Dunga, Pariakot and Goti in Bhairamgarh Mar and the Mohanda villages of Lakka, Puslakka and Bhuri in Kutru Mar; of the former group the headman of Pariakot is the head *gaita*, though Dunga is the parent village, for the ancestor of

the headman of Pariakot was headman of Dunga when he founded 632
Pariakot from Dunga; of the latter group the headman of Lakka, 622
the parent village, is the head *gaita*, and has since been appointed *pargana* headman of the Kutru Mar *pargana* as the most influential headman in the *pargana*. In these cases, as generally among Hill Marias, the *waddai* or clan-priest is not the headman of the clan. But the Marias of Kutru south of the Indrawati and of the adjacent parts of Bijapur who are of Hill Maria origin modified in culture by contact with Bison-horn Maria and other neighbours, have usually their *waddai*, by them designated *modul wadde*, as the secular head of the clan as well as clan-priest. The names and villages of most of these clans have been given in the footnote to page 202. The post is hereditary, but the holder is sometimes deposed if he does not duly propitiate the clan-god or is oppressive. In matters affecting the State and in ordinary village routine he has no authority (unless he has been recognized as *pargana* headman), the village *peda* and *perma* being supreme; and in ordinary village *panchayats* he probably takes no part, except in his own village, and even there probably only as a member, the *peda* being the president. As social arbiter he decides tribal cases, such as breaches of social rules and marriage disputes, at the annual harvest festival, there known as the *Pindi Pandum*, with the aid of a clan *panchayat* of the leading *pedas* and *permas* of the clan villages.

Among the Hill Marias of Antagarh tahsil, that is to say of the 622
greater part of the Abujhmar hills, we have seen that the *parganas* 623
are clan-areas, the exception being the large Chhota Dongar *pargana*, 632
where, however, the Usendi clan predominates and is recognized by the other clans as the chief clan of the *pargana*. The man now recognized by the State as the *pargania majhi* or headman of each of these *parganas* is the hereditary clan headman or *pargania gaita*. He is the chief headman of the village headmen of his clan rather than clan headman, for, though orders issue as his orders, they are issued always after consultation with a *panchayat* of the leading headmen, religious and secular, and elders of the villages in the clan-area. Any attempt on the part of a *pargania gaita* to presume on his position to make himself a little chief or tyrant is fiercely resisted by the clan; one of the reasons for the 1916 murder at Orcha of Usendi Bhosa, the headman of the Chhota Dongar *pargana*, was the belief that he was trying to 'set up a *raj* over Metabhum'. Similarly in villages the headman's authority is rather that of the spokesman of the village elders than his own individual authority. If the tahsildar sends word to the *pargania gaita* that, for example, a camp or camps have to be prepared in his *pargana* for the Diwan, or that on a certain date each village in the *pargana* has to supply

622 623 632 men for road repairs, the *pargania gaita* cannot merely send out orders to the headman of each village in his *pargana* assigning his village a share of the *pargana* task. But he has to send out his *garhai* or messenger, a clan servant remunerated in grain at two or three *paili* per cultivator, to call in the *gaita*, *kasyeq-gaita* and leading elders of each of the clan villages to a meeting at his village or some central spot, at which he arranges the distribution of the work in consultation with them. Similar meetings are called for arranging collections of money or grain for any clan festival, such as Koqsar, or any special disease-averting or tiger-averting ceremony. In a dispute between some of his villagers as to the distribution of the work he naturally would give the final word; and similarly when he calls in selected village *gaitas* to sit with him to decide inter-village disputes or to interfere with what he considers a wrong decision of a village *panchayat* he may have the final word. Strictly speaking, he is at liberty to dissent from the members of his meetings and *panchayats* and to insist on his own view being the final view in the matter; but in practice he would get short shrift if he made a habit of going against the majority. In actual fact, therefore, we have here a tribal organization very similar to that postulated by Mr. C. U. Wills, I.C.S., in his monograph on 'The Territorial System of the Rajput Kingdoms of Medieval Chhattisgarh' (see pages 4 and 33 above) as the foundation on which the Chhattisgarh Maharajas superimposed their roughly feudal system. In the village the *kasyeq-gaita* or the *gaita* is merely *primus inter pares* in regard to the village elders and in the clan or *pargana* the *pargania gaita* in regard to the *gaitas* and *kasyeq-gaitas* of the other villages of the clan or *pargana*. The natural democratic tendencies of the tribe not only are a bulwark against mismanagement by State officials, but also block any attempt on the part of a village or *pargana* headman to become a local despot. We have seen already[1] how even when the *kasyeq-gaita* of the village enthroned on his *udam-garia* stone seat of honour at the Koqsar festival announces the agricultural programme of the coming year he is issuing no independent orders, but merely confirming *ex cathedra* the decisions already reached in *panchayat* between him and the elders. These stone seats for the *kasyeq-gaita* and *gaita* are almost the only outward sign of their primacy in their villages; and in some villages they sit on them also to preside over meetings of the elders for administrative or judicial work. The photograph on plate XXIII opposite this page shows the *kasyeq-gaita* and *gaita* of Itulnar thus seated in *panchayat*.

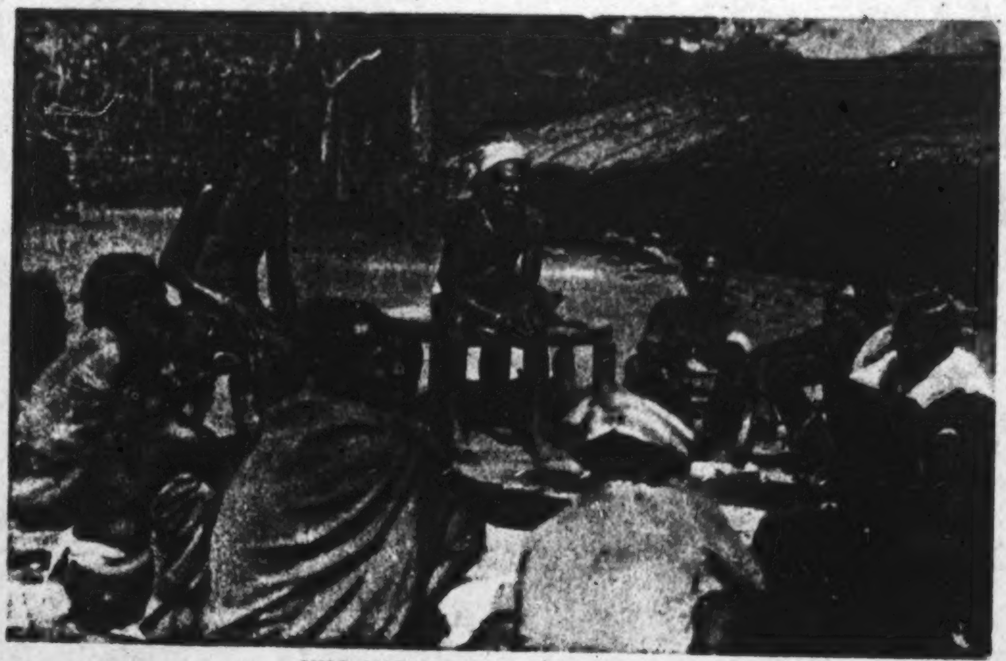
In the Bison-horn Maria country there are no contiguous clan or phratry areas, and the *parganas* often represent former petty

---

[1] See page 141.

PLATE XXIII

facing p. 290.



HILL MARIA *PANCHAYAT*, ITULNAR
showing religious and secular headmen seated on stone udam-garya seats

[face p. 290

623
516
352

622 kingdoms or *garhs* of forgotten chiefs, or divisions of the early
medieval Telanga kingdoms of Barsur, Dantewara or Bhairamgarh.
623 The Marias there are perhaps later arrivals, spread over a land once
632 ruled by comparatively civilized and organized Telanga princes.
There are *pargana* headmen, with wide influence and authority;
but their authority possibly does not derive in the same sense from
the clan, and may have been conferred in the not very distant past
by the State because of the obvious advantages of having such
central intermediaries between the State and the tribes. They
have to deal with villages of many different clans, and far larger
villages at that than those of the Hill Marias. These villages are
still throwing off new *para* or hamlets, which often become bigger
than the parent village, and soon for practical reasons have to have
their own *peda* and *perma*, though these will be called the *chudala*, or
small, in contrast to the *birya*, or big, *peda* and *perma* of the parent
village. Among the Bison-horn Marias, therefore, it is natural to
find the village *panchayat* exercising a more real authority and
greater independence of the *pargana* headman and *panchayat* than
among the Hill Marias. Nevertheless the formal recognition under
the recent State orders of the *pargana* headman and his *panchayat*
as a court of appeal from the judicial decisions of the village elders
is bound to strengthen his position. The Bison-horn Maria has
always been more in contact with and more ready to learn from the
outside world than the Hill Maria, and there are many village and
pargana headmen who show real leadership and force of character.

Social offences involving exclusion from tribal ceremonies and
689 feasts are very similar in these days to those of neighbouring Hindu
564 castes. The worst offences are to get maggots in wounds, to take
food from or have sexual relations with persons of the despised
684 Ghasia, Mahra or Lohar castes, and to break the rules of exogamy by
having sexual relations with a girl of a brother-clan. Another
688 offence, which among the Bison-horn Marias may lead to considerable trouble, is the eating of any new crop or the cutting of grass
or bamboo before the appropriate *pandum* has been celebrated;
this form of sacrilege is believed to be avenged by the earth or
clan-god sending tigers to carry off cattle or men, and in a case
which came before me in which such a visitation had followed the
cutting of grass by two villagers before the Kare Pandum the
panchayat had ordered them to compensate the owner of each cow
or bullock killed by the avenging tigers. The way in which breaches
of the rules of exogamy are dealt with has already been described
689 (pages 245-6 above). Any form of social relations with Ghasia,
Mahra or Lohar, however unwitting, entails penalties not only
564 on the actual offender, but also often on his near kinsmen. In the
783

684
564
783

1913 case (see page 283 above) in which two Hill Marias murdered a Maria Lohar girl with whom they had been cohabiting, their parents and brothers all had to be purified by the *pargana* headman, and the actual murderers were purified by him a year after the murder; one of the main reasons for the villagers hushing up the crime was the belief that greater harm might have resulted to the clan if the Lohar girl had borne a child to the murderers than from them killing her. In 1926, Oyami Masa of Malhanar in the Kutru Mar hill *pargana*, an orphan boy six years old, was outcasted for taking some food from a Ghasia who was spending the night in the village *kos-gotul*[1] (strangers' rest-house) and found the child half-starved. As soon as the villagers heard of this they regarded him as outcasted. They realized, however, that he could not be expected to pay the expenses of the purification ceremony, and as they themselves had had poor harvests and were not in a position to meet the cost just then, they built a hut for the child at some distance from the rest of the village, and there he had to live for two years, till they could pay to purify him; meanwhile they provided food for him, leaving it for him at some distance from his hut. After two years had elapsed they subscribed eight annas cash as remuneration to Arki Burga of Jegur, the *Sendhia*, ten *paili* of rice and a *paili* of pulse, and invited the *Sendhia* to come and purify the boy. The men of the neighbouring villages of the clan were also asked to attend. At the bidding of the *Sendhia* the villagers built seven small huts in a row, and the boy had to pass through each in turn, each being burnt down as soon as he had passed through it. The *Sendhia* himself then shaved the whole of the boy's head, including even his crown-tuft. This done, the boy was taken to the river, made to bathe thrice and brought back to the village, where the *Sendhia* burnt his tongue with a *karra* (*Odsa marra*) twig, made him drink a little from a cup of milk into which he had dipped a piece of gold, and sprinkled the rest of the milk over the boy and the onlookers. The boy then fetched water, and in this the *Sendhia* boiled the rice and pulses, and served the cooked food to the boy and all the clansmen present. This incident typifies the way in which Marias combine to relieve each other's difficulties. The postponement of the caste feast until the offender has had time to collect all that is necessary is almost a rule of tribal life, and one that might with advantage be copied by the pharasaical elders of Hindu castes in British India. The social offence may offend the clan-god, and so its expiation is the concern of the whole clan, which therefore must help the offender gradually to raise the cost of the expiation ceremonies.

---

[1] See page 106 above.

In the chapter on marriage we saw how the elders had to witness the betrothal ceremonies, and how the *panchayats* deal with 623 cases of divorce and elopement. It may be added that among the 622 Hill Marias the clan-headman, like the *Sendhia* of the Chanda Marias, gets certain traditional fees which the parties have to pay in addition 693 to the compensation which the *panchayat* may award to the injured parents or husband, or to the cost of the tribal feast; at every marriage in Kutru and Bhairamgarh Mar the clan-headman gets a fee of eight annas; when a *panchayat* has settled the compensation to be given to the first husband by the man with whom his wife has eloped, the old and the new husband have each to pay the clan-headman four annas. But the latter is expected not to retain the whole of his fee-income, but to divide it with the headmen of the villages of his clan who have assisted in the ceremony or *panchayat*.

I have already described on page 246 above, the ordeal to 695 which the Gume Hill Maria clan *panchayat* in 1929 subjected a Toinar youth accused of incest with a girl of his clan. How far the ordeal survives in the remotest parts of the State I cannot say; naturally instances of its use very seldom come to light. There is reason to believe that ordeals of this kind were a regular feature of the 'justice' administered by bygone Chiefs and zamindars of Bastar, rather than a product of aboriginal thought; compare the account of the settlement of the Kudmer-Jatalur land dispute at page 96 above. Ordinarily, however, the *panchayats* follow no regular procedure beyond hearing the parties and their friends as informally as possible and deciding the case then and there after free discussion among themselves.

Questions of property seldom arise among the Hill Marias, 691 there being obviously so little scope for dispute when 95 per cent. of the cultivation is shifting cultivation of hillsides regarded as the 421 property of the clan and not of the individual, and when the village site is shifted at least every six years. Sons after marriage live in a separate portion of the long-house of their father or uncle, if there [591] is space for adding a portion for them, or else build a separate house as close as possible; when next the village is shifted there is ample space for all to live in separate houses under one long-house roof. Questions of inheritance of houses therefore arise only when, as among the Bison-horn Marias, villages have become permanent and are not shifted at regular intervals. Even here, however, there are few disputes. The little value set on houses is shown by the fact that it is generally the youngest son who lives on in the father's [428] house after his death, as probably his elder brothers will have married long before him and built separate houses for themselves on marriage. There is among the Bison-horn Marias a vague right to demand

691 partition of a father's property when a son sets up house for himself,
but although he can press for his share, it is felt by the community
421 to be against tribal spirit, rather than unfilial. When, on the
other hand, a father had outraged tribal feelings by seducing his
sons' wives and driving his sons from his house, his refusal to let
his sons have any share in the family property was considered by
the Bison-horn Marias an additional justification for his subsequent
murder by his sons.

691 There is so little domestic property of great value among the
Hill Marias, and so many of a man's few tools and possessions, as we
428 have seen, are buried with him, that inheritance disputes about
movable property are almost unknown. Though among the
768 Bison-horn Marias less is buried or burned with the dead, the
remaining movable property generally passes with the house;
if the elder sons have set up separate establishments in their father's
lifetime they will have equipped themselves with the few possessions
they need, and will not worry about the younger brother appropriating
what their father has left. Women's ornaments generally
are buried or burned with them.

428 When the inheritance includes valuable rice-lands, they
remain generally the joint property of the sons and brother's sons,
and the father's surviving brothers, the eldest son generally nominally
being the manager, though he will certainly have to give way
to an uncle or younger brother or cousin if he is inefficient, weak-minded
or deformed. The produce will be stored in his granary,
but shared among the members of the family.

428 Daughters and sisters have no right of inheritance of their
father's or brothers' lands or property. For the land is really
736 the land of the clan, and the daughters and sisters will on marriage
have passed to the clans of their husbands. A widow is entitled
587 only to maintenance, and as on her husband's death she very
often becomes the wife of his younger brother, she gets her maintenance
as a matter of course; if he leaves no younger brother and
she does not marry again, she lives on in her late husband's house
and works with other women of the family, and is maintained by
their husbands. A girl whose parents die before she is married
frequently goes to a married sister's house and becomes a co-wife.

562 For a woman on the whole is a kind of property, or a valuable
adjunct to the house and family. For her, the husband's family has
had to pay a bride-price that is a severe tax on its resources[1];
or else, where cross-cousin marriage prevails,[2] she represents the
repayment of a debt incurred when her father took his bride from

---

[1] See pp. 248-50 and 252-3 above.

[2] See pp. 234 and 247 above.

the family and clan to which she goes as a bride. She may elope with another man, but he must compensate the first husband. 562 She must work for her husband, having his meals ready in the home or taking them to him in the field when he wants them, gathering forest fruits and roots, and doing her appointed work in the fields; many a woman has paid with her life by exasperating her tired husband by not having his food ready or by cooking it badly. She is not a full human being like a man. She is taboo when menstruating; she may not sleep in the field when the crops are ripening; she is debarred from attending at the festivals and *pandum*; she has no special dancing dress. Yet with all this she has not too bad a position. As a girl she has considerable freedom both in pre-marital sexual life and in the choice of a husband, and she is fairly free to leave her husband if he ill-treats her, or if he cannot beget a child. Tribal sentiment strongly condemns wife-beating. Her natural taste for ornament is given full scope, her parents gradually collecting beads and metal neck and arm rings, her boy-companion presenting her with beads and carved hair-combs, and her husband when she is married recognizing her right to spend a few of the scanty pice she earns from the sale of her basketry at the bazaar on simple trinkets. She participates in the tribal dances and songs, though not in the religious ceremonies that accompany them. In fact her position *vis-a-vis* her husband is far freer than that of the ordinary Hindu wife. Above all, she is not exposed to the evil of child marriage and premature motherhood, of which habits of their Hindu neighbours Maria headmen will speak with abhorrence.

The recent State Order restoring jurisdiction to Panchayats

Such in brief and imperfect outline are the main principles governing tribal law and custom, and the main features of the old 621 village and tribal headman and *panchayat* organization. No attempt has been made in this chapter to draw any clear-cut distinction between the ways of the Hill and the Bison-horn Marias; in actual practice both treat such matters in much the same way, the main distinctions being (*a*) that the primitive clan organization is stronger and the authority of the headmen more limited by that of elders among the Hill Marias, and (*b*) that the Bison-horn Maria has been more in contact with the outer Hindu world than the Hill Maria.

Under the State Order framed in 1932 by my successor, the 692 regular criminal courts of the State have been deprived of jurisdiction over the primitive tribes in cases of certain public nuisances, simple 623 hurt and assault, thefts (except of cattle), of property worth Rs. 5 or less, mischief, trespass, house-trespass, bigamy, adultery and

692 623 enticing a married woman from her husband.[1] The civil courts have been deprived of jurisdiction in claims for civil damages arising out of these criminal offences, and in simple money, grain and cattle claims up to Rs. 25 in value. All such cases are to be dealt with by the village *panchayat*, the convening of which and the selection of the elders of which are left to the village headman. No particular lines have been laid down to regulate procedure; the *panchayats* are not allowed to impose more than Rs. 25 as a fine, though in marriage cases they may allow marriage expenses up to Rs. 50, while corporal, barbarous or degrading punishments are prohibited; and the village *kotwar* or watchman at his periodic visits to the police station has to report the results of cases decided by the *panchayats* of his villages since his last visit. Any person dissatisfied with a decision of the village headman and elders can appeal within a month to the *pargana* headman, who is assisted by a *panchayat* of four headmen chosen every year by the assembled headmen of the villages of the *pargana* before the tahsildar. Though no orders were issued to regulate the disposal of fines, the headmen are encouraged to spend them on village improvements, save where tribal custom prescribes a tribal feast as part of the penalty.

623 There has not as yet been time enough to judge the success of this attempt to restore authority to the headmen and elders. In some parts the *panchayats* appear to be working surprisingly well on the whole; in some they either have little work to do or else have not won the confidence of the tribes through not having the right men as members, or perhaps through a weak man having been made headman in the old days and not yet having been ousted by the religious headman or the natural leader of the village; a few have had to be superseded, and the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts restored, because they were tampered with by Hindu and Mohammedan traders in adjacent market villages; here foreign influence had perhaps already gone too far towards detribalizing the village life. Obviously a good deal depends on the personality of the *pargana* and village headmen, and on the unobtrusive sympathy and watchfulness of the State officials; regular inspection and interference would, of course, be fatal to the success of what is largely an attempt to defend the tribes from the visits of the petty official. In the Abujhmar hills and the parts of Dantewara and Jagdalpur tahsils which I visited in 1934, the headmen and elders greatly appreciated the relief which the orders had given from the burdens of police and court investigations, and the *pargana* headmen were taking their appellate duties seriously and fairly soundly. It

---

[1] The actual Penal Code sections are 277, 290, 323, 334, 341, 352, 354, 355, 370, 380, 426, 447, 448, 494, 497, 498 and 504.

is no use expecting formalism from such unlettered tribal tribunals; the rules as issued perhaps err a little on the side of formalism, and the *panchayats* must not be expected to follow them too strictly or blamed if at times they exceed their nominal powers, so long as rough, ready and cheap justice, within the comprehension of the villagers, results. Once the real leaders of the clans and villages learn that the State is trusting them and that they can trust the State also, the headmen and *panchayats* will be an admirable focus for the introduction and spread of measures of enlightenment. 623

[p.298 is blank]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

APPENDIX I

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS OF BASTAR STATE

631
161

	Area[1] (*sq. miles*)	*Population* (1931 *Census*)
TAHSILS :		
Jagdalpur	1,996	198,640
Kondagaon	1,880	83,992
Antagarh	2,885	51,703
Dantewara	1,016	75,872
Konta	1,336	14,206
Bijapur	989	24,135
ZAMINDARIS :		
Kutru	1,360	14,836
Bhopalpatnam	720	17,596
Sukma	650	40,171
Kotapalli-Pamer	230	1,132
TOTAL	13,062[1]	522,283[2]

---

[1] The areas are given according to the figures current before recent surveys. These surveys have only covered portions of the State, and will not be completed till 1944. In May 1934 the Survey of India, computing from the old maps of the Trigonometrical Survey (which I have often found surprisingly inaccurate for the wilder parts of the State) and from the revised figures of recent surveys, calculated the true area to be 13,725 square miles for the whole State. Revised calculations for each tahsil and zamindari are not available.

[2] The populations of each tahsil and zamindari given above were calculated in the State from preliminary census returns ; but separate figures were not isolated by the Central Provinces Census Office. The true population of the State was finally returned as 524,721.

APPENDIX II

618
632
621
776

LISTS OF HILL MARIA CLANS AND BISON-HORN MARIA CLANS AND PHRATRIES, AND PEDIGREE OF THE HILL MARIA FAMILY HOLDING THE HEREDITARY HEADMANSHIP OF CHHOTA DONGAR PARGANA AND ORCHA VILLAGE

[(d) Signifies that the village was deserted in 1934]

HILL MARIA CLANS

Clan	Pargana	Villages	Clan-god	Totem
Usendi	Chhota Dongar	Orcha Japgunda Hoinar (d) Juwada Dugarli Bagom Thadur Machan Duseli Kejang (d) Uragonda (d)	Wikir Hunga (kept at Japgunda, but brought to Orcha for festivals)	Goat
	Kutru Mar	Michwada	None	
	Kirangal (*not Hill Maria but Gotal Murias*)	One or two villages	?	
	Chanda District	?	?	
Wadder	Chhota Dongar	Dhanora Jori Hikpalla Kodeli Perilmeta Rengabera (d)	Worship the Usendi god Wikir Hunga of Japgunda	None
	Bhomra (Muria)	Kurselhur	Use Dokra of Kurselhur	
	Chanda District, and Kutru S. of Indrawati	Kaunde and others, and Madhepar and a few more in Kutru	Kuwo-Gundo of Kaunde	
Korami	Chhota Dongar	Hirangai Verma	Worship the Usendi god of Japgunda	None

618
632
<621
776

Clan	Pargana	Villages	Clan-god	Totem
Dodi	Do.	Jhara Rajpur Idnar	Do.	None
Deda	Chhota Dongar	Kurmer Dedalur	Nule Harma or Eram Mo'itto of Kurmer	None
Parsal	Do.	Chalcheghi	Do.	None
Katlami	Do.	Jhori Hikpalla (shared with Wadder)	Panda Hunga of Jhori, elder brother of Wikir Hunga, the Usendi god	None
Jugho, *alias* Karme (plural, Jughalor)	Chhota Dongar	Adeq Karanmeta (d) Akmeta (d) Maspur (d) Nelanar Makawada Gomagal Hasnar Rainar	Worships the Usendi god Wikir Hunga of Japgunda	None; the name Karme said to mean 'sunset', the ancestor of clan having been born then
	Bhairamgarh Mar	Gapa (d) Itulnar	Say would worship Wikir Hunga if still in Chhota Dongar *pargana*, but no need as now in Kutru zamindari	
Dhurwa (almost a branch of Jughalor)	Chhota Dongar	Share Gomagal and Hasnar with Jughalor	Worship the Usendi god Wikir Hunga of Japgunda but have also his sister Oghal Muttai as their own god	None; clan says it is elder brother of Jughalor

618
632
621
776

Clan	Pargana	Villages	Clan-god	Totem
Dol ('younger brothers' of Jughalor)	Do.	Kohkapaghai	Worship Usendi god Wikir Hunga	Called Dol because members started making *dol* drums
Matami	Do.	Teknar	Do.	None
Dugher	Do.	Maramnar	Do.	None
Potawi	Do.	Almost extinct; one house in Orcha	Do.	None
Poyami	Do.	Kundali (one house)	Do.	None
Gecha	Do. Mangnar	Udala Tondawada Wetekal (d)	Do.	None. Name means 'sluggard' clan
Neghal	Chhota Dongar	Bhera Tondawada	Do.	Panther
Ahkal	Do.	Gudadi	Do.	None
Ete[1]	Do.	Kondakoti	Nule Harma of Kurmer	? Crab
Boka	Do.	Dondrewada Bokalur		None
Kohla	Chhota Dongar	Mandali Kushnar Batwada Kostari Gumter Hoinger Devanar Kerinar Irpenar	Mu'ima Kohla Pen of Batwada	?
Padāl	Padalibhum	All the *pargana*	Gumtuli Muttai, of Adnar	None
Kumoti	Chhota Dongar	Almost extinct; 2 houses in Hasnar, 1 in Rainar	None	None
Jāti	Jātwara	Most of the *pargana*	?	?

---

[1] Ete is probably the same as Yete, a Kutru Mar clan.

618
632
621
776

Clan	Pargana	Villages	Clan-god	Totem
Boter	Kutru Mar	Boter	None	None
Wachami	Kutru Mar and Ahiri (mostly Indrawati valley)	Kumharmeta Markanar Irkapal Karkalli Bodeli and some Ahiri villages	Wachami Moitto Pen of Kumharmeta	?
Mohanda	Kutru Mar	Lakka Hingmeta Bhuri Puslakka	A god at Lakka	?
Oyāmi	Bhairamgarh Mar	Komu Kalhaza Malahanar (d)	None	None
Mohke	Do. Chhota Dongar	2 houses in Kalhaza Albera (d)	None	None
Yete	Bhairamgarh Mar	Hoinar	None	Crab
Pungati	Do.	2 houses in Ader (Kutru)	None	?
Bardāl	Bardal	Whole *pergana*	Hurra Mu'iya of Kornār	None
	Tāpalibhum	Ranimarka		
Farsāl	Farsāl	Whole *pergana* (13 inhabited villages)	Kodo Mo'itto of Dhurwada	None
	Bhairamgarh	Bheriabhum	None	
Gōtāl	Hukkagotal	Whole *pergana* (9 inhabited villages)	Pāhanleya Muttari of Tōinar in Tulagotal	None
	Tulagotal	Whole *pergana* (9 inhabited villages)	Do.	None
	Farsigotal	Whole *pergana* (5 inhabited villages)	Tōp Mudya of Mohandi, said to be younger brother of Pahanley's husband	None

618
621
632
776

Clan	Pargana	Villages	Clan-god	Totem
Tapa	Tapālibhūm (Chhote Mar)	Nearly all the villages of the *pargana*	Riksa Pen of Dodrimarka in Tapalibhum	None
Nughoti, *alias* Nuroti	Nurbhum jātwara Tapalibhum	All *pargana* but Turko Kohkameta Markawada Hachekote	?	None
Hichami	Nurbhum	Turko	The Nughoti god	?
Parllo	Kutru Mar	Dodmarka Karangul Nugur Ader (Kutru) Padmeta	Koruk Pen of Karangal and Nugur	Goat
Jātā	Kutru Mar Chhote Dongar	Jātalur Akdum (d)	None	?
Kohka	Bhairamgarh Mar	Kakowada, or Kakawoki	None	Kohka-marra the marking-nut tree
Ark	Do.	Korowaya; sold Itulnar to Jughalor	None	None
Jāte (plural, Jāterom)	Mangnar	Mornar	Pat Raja	The Jāte grass used for making brooms to sweep the god's shrine
Tokalor	Mangnar	Erpanar	Do.	The *toka* or flap of loin-cloth left to hang behind like a tail
Hukur	Mangnar	Erpanar	Do.	The *huk* or basketry ladle used to stir rice cooked at the god's shrine

618
621
632
776

Clan	Pargana	Villages	Clan-god	Totem
Marvi	Mangnar	Tökhtöll Kuwer Modangwada Moghori	Mārā-māgh, Pat Raja's sister's son or *bāranjal*. They get leave from Pat Raja to hold his nephew's festivals	?
Tamo	Dantewara Mar	Tumirgunda Padmeta	Hurra Gunda Moitto of Tumirgunda	None
Atami[1]	Barsur	Chhota Karka Palawaya	Do.	?
Lekami[1]	Barsur	Batawada Ghotpal	Use Modia of Ghotpal	?

There were one or two Lekami houses in the Hill Maria villages of Handawada and Dunga.

Game	Dantewara or Barsur Mar	Toinar Handawada Hikul Thakawada Paralnar Prinkapal Kodokal Hitawada	Verma Mo'itto Pen of Toinar. The *waddai* is Jātē by clan	None
	Bhairamgarh	Kunjewada Goti Dunga Pariakot	None	
Alami	Mangnar	Nendur Gatla	Attend festivals of Pat Raja, god of Jāterom at Mornar	Chameleon (alām)
Nonde	Mangnar	Rotad	Do.	Rope

---

[1] Now, in culture, Bison-horn clans; but the Lekami intermarries with the Game clan, and the Atami still worships the Hill Maria *pen* of the Tamo clan.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

5

615
618

BISON-HORN MARIA PHRATRIES AND CLANS

Phratry	Totem	Clans	Totem
1. Mârvi	Goat (Dantewara Jagdalpur) Cobra (Sukma and Konta)	Bârse	
		Biryâ Mârvi	
		Chudalâ Mârvi	
		Dôdi	
		Hêmlâ	Tortoise
		Kuppê	
		Oyâmi	
		Pêdâmi	
		Tamo	
2. Kuhrâmi or Kadiâri	Cuckoo (*kadiâri*)	Budâdi	
		Gaddi	
		Kartâmi	Hornbill (*karot*)
		Kuhrâmi (or Karâmi)	Do.
		Kunjâmi	Screech-owl (*kunje-pitte*)
		Lêkâmi	
		Poriâmi	Buffalo
		Rawa	
		Veko	
		Wetti	
[1]3. Sôdi or Ôdi	Tiger	Biryâ Sôdi	Buffalo
		Chudalâ Sôdi	Do.
		Oikâ	
4. Markâmi	Tortoise	Atâmi (or Atrâmi)	*Atra*, the flower of the *phul-behari* grass
		Bâlê	
		Bôtê	
		Bhôyâmi	
		Biryâ Markâmi	
		Chudalâ Markâmi	
		Dudhi	
		Dumo	
		Durro	
		Gonche	
		Kalmu	Goat
		Karte (or Kandte)	
		Kikder	
		Miriyâmi	
		Neñdi	
		Nupo	
		Poyâmi	Buffalo
		Tâti (or Tâmti)	
		Tēlâmi	
		Tikder	
		Undâmi	

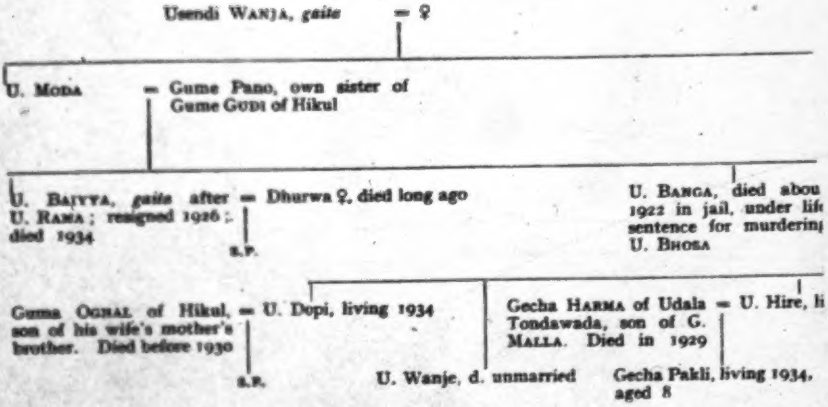
---

[1] The tiger was the original totem, and the clan is still spoken of as the tiger-race; but the tigers have broken the legendary rule that no tiger will attack a Sôdi, and the Sôdis retaliate by joining in tiger-beats and adopting the buffalo as their totem instead of the tiger.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

PEDIGREE OF THE

601
632



Usendi WANJA, *gaita* = ♀

U. MODA = Gume Pano, own sister of Gume GUDI of Hikul

U. BAIYYA, *gaita* after U. RANA; resigned 1926; died 1934 = Dhurwa ♀, died long ago

S.P.

U. BANGA, died abou 1922 in jail, under lif sentence for murderin U. BHOSA

Guma OGHAL of Hikul, son of his wife's mother's brother. Died before 1930 = U. Dopi, living 1934

S.P.

U. Wanje, d. unmarried

Gecha HARMA of Udala Tondawada, son of G. MALLA. Died in 1929 = U. Hire, li

Gecha Pakli, living 1934, aged 8

[p. 306(A)]

U. B.
killed
accide
salphi

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32

Hill Maria

601

632

GREE OF THE ORCHA FAMILY IN WHICH SUCCESSION TO *PARGANA* AN

J. **Banga**, died about 922 in jail, under life entence for murdering J. **Bhosa** = Gume Ippo, d. of his mother's brother, G. **Gudi** of Hikul. Living 1934, nearly 80

of Udala = U. **Hire**, living
n of G.
in 1929

cha Pakli, living 1934.
d 8

U. **Moda**, about 55 in 1934. released in 1926 after 10 years of life sentence for U. **Bhosa**'s murder. *Gaita* since 1928 = ♀ = (2) Gecha Kowe, own sister of his brother-in-law Gecha **Harma**, married year after him and Hire. Living 1934, about 34

♀

(U. **Bhosa**'s magic was said to have killed this wife and daughter)

U. **Irka**, 8 years old in 1934

U.

U. **Bhosa**, became *gaita* when in about 1910 U. **Bajyya**, his first cousin, resigned, and was appointed *pargania* (*pargana* head man). Murdered in 1916 for magic and 'trying to set up a *raj* over Metabhum'; was then 60 = Potawi Kane, d. of P. **Murra** of Tulur hamlet of Orcha. Living in 1934 in part of U. **Pola**'s house and cooking for him, but not as his wife

U. **Baranga**, said to have killed himself in 1927 by accidentally falling from a *salphi* tree

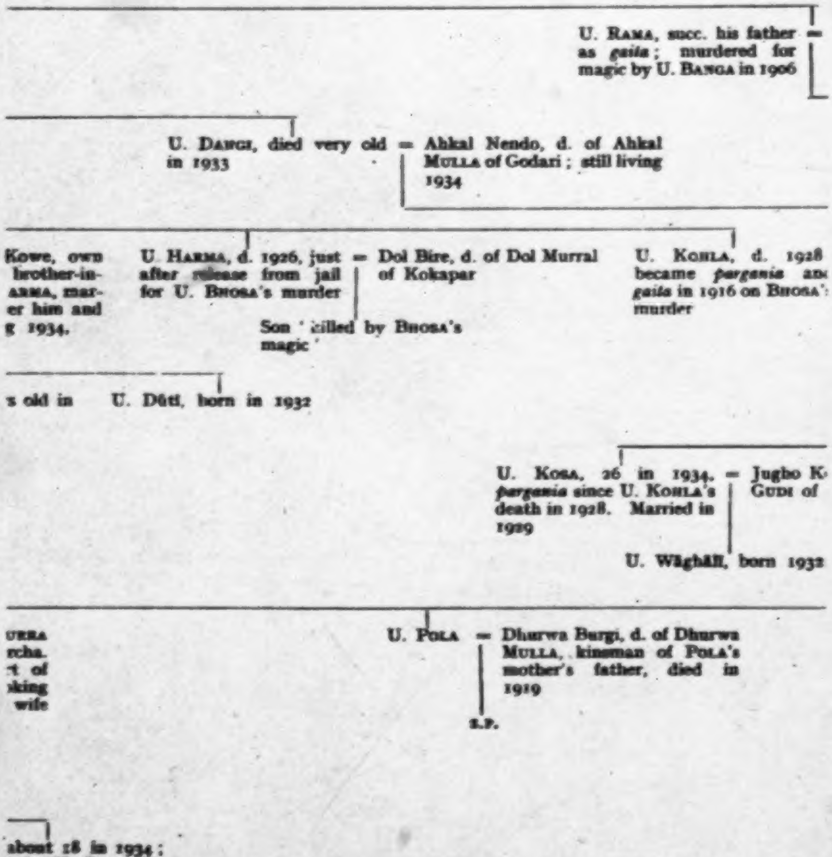
U. **Irka**, about 18 in 193 brought up by U. **Pola**, uncle

[p. 306(B)]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

601
632

RGANA AND FAMILY HEADSHIP IS HEREDITARY



U. Rama, succ. his father as *gaita*; murdered for magic by U. Banga in 1906

U. Dangi, died very old in 1933 = Ahkal Nendo, d. of Ahkal Mulla of Godari; still living 1934

Kowe, own brother-in- arma, mar- er him and g 1934.

U. Harma, d. 1926, just after release from jail for U. Bhosa's murder = Dol Bire, d. of Dol Murral of Kokapar

Son killed by Bhosa's magic

U. Kohla, d. 1928 became *pargania* an *gaita* in 1916 on Bhosa's murder

s old in

U. Düti, born in 1932

U. Kosa, 26 in 1934, *pargania* since U. Kohla's death in 1928. Married in 1929 = Jugbo K Gudi of

U. Wāghāli, born 1932

urra rcha. t of king wife

U. Pola = Dhurwa Burgi, d. of Dhurwa Mulla, kinsman of Pola's mother's father, died in 1919

s.p.

about 18 in 1934; p by U. Pola, his

[p. 306 (c)]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

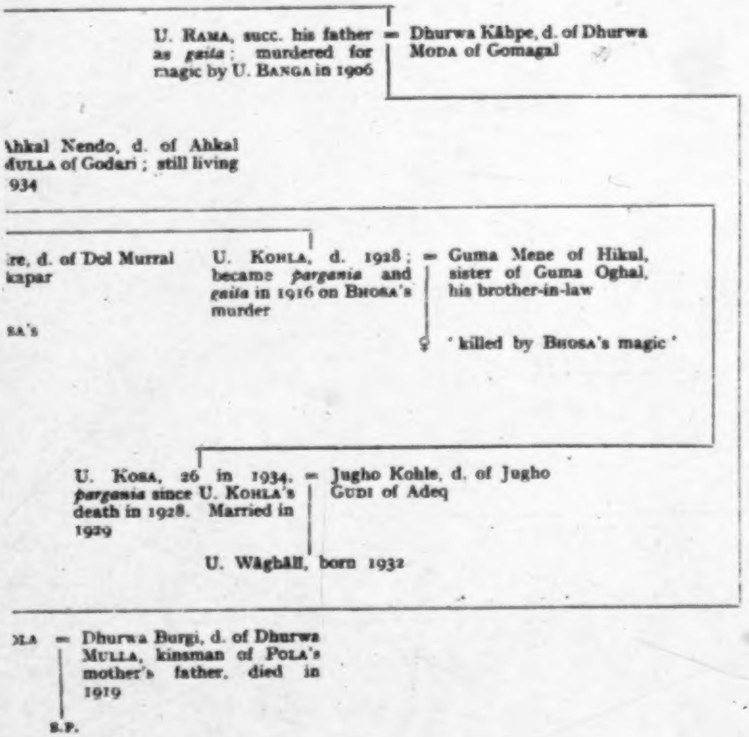
AW32 Gond AW32

Hill Maria

601

632

HEREDITARY



U. RAMA, succ. his father as *gaita*; murdered for magic by U. BANGA in 1906 = Dhurwa Kãhpe, d. of Dhurwa MODA of Gomagal

Ahkal Nendo, d. of Ahkal MULLA of Godari; still living 1934

re, d. of Dol Murral kapar

sa's

U. KOHLA, d. 1928; became *pargania* and *gaita* in 1916 on BHOSA's murder = Guma Mene of Hikul, sister of Guma Oghal, his brother-in-law

♀ 'killed by BHOSA's magic'

U. KOSA, 26 in 1934, *pargania* since U. KOHLA's death in 1928. Married in 1929 = Jugho Kohle, d. of Jugho GUDI of Adeq

U. Wãghãli, born 1932

LA = Dhurwa Burgi, d. of Dhurwa MULLA, kinsman of POLA's mother's father, died in 1919

S.P.

[p. 306(D)]

615
618

	Phratry	Totem	Clans	Totem
5.	Kawāsī or Wanjāmī	Tortoise	Beṛtā Dirdōḍ Kawāsī Muchākī Murāmī Paḍāmī Urve Wanjāmī	

The following six clan names have not been attributed to their phratries : Gonde, Kiske, Korsa, Punem, Rega, Savalam.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

APPENDIX III

HILL MARIA TERMS OF RELATIONSHIP

(These are terms of reference; but see p. 244)

601

Father	*tāppe*
Mother	*talugh, awā*
Stepfather	*kākā*
Stepmother	*kuchī*
Elder brother (m.s.)	*dādā*
Elder brother (w.s.)	*dādā*
Elder sister (m.s.)	*ākkā (ākālī)*
Elder sister (w.s.)	*ākkā*
Father's elder brother	*pepī*
Father's elder brother's wife	*perī*
Father's younger brother	*kākā*
Father's younger brother's wife	*kuchī*
Father's elder brother's son	*dādā*
Father's elder brother's daughter	*āngē*
Father's sister (elder or younger)	*ātō*
Father's sister's husband	*bachā*
Father's sister's child	*marriyō* (m) *mandārī* (f)
Mother's brother	*māmā*
Mother's brother's wife	*ātō*
Mother's brother's child	*marriyō* (m) *mandārī* (f)
Mother's elder sister	*perī*
Mother's younger sister	*kuchī*
Mother's sister's husband	*kākā*
Father's father	*tādō*
Father's mother	*bāpī*

Son	*māghī*
Daughter	*miārī*
Son	*māghī*
Daughter	*miārī*
Stepson	*māghī*
Stepdaughter	*miārī*
Younger brother (m.s.)	*tamō*
Younger sister (m.s.)	*hellār*
Younger brother (w.s.)	*tamō*
Younger sister (w.s.)	
Younger brother's child (m.s.)	*māghī* (m) *miārī* (f)
Elder brother's child (m.s.)	
Husband's brother's child	
Father's younger brother's son	*tamō*
Father's younger brother's daughter	*hellār*
Brother's son (w.s.)	*pedā*
Wife's brother's son	*māmā*
Mother's brother's child	*marriyō* (m) *mandārī* (f)
Sister's child (m.s.)	*bachā* (m) *bachī* (f)
Husband's sister's child	*hanemāghī* (m) *hanemiārī* (f)
Father's sister's child	*marriyō* (m) *mandārī* (f)
Younger or elder sister's child (w.s.)	*māghi* (m) *miārī* (f)
Son's son (m.s.)	*tamō*
Son's daughter (m.s.)	*hellār*
Son's son (w.s.)	*wandō*
Son's daughter (w.s.)	

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

601

Mother's father	*ākō*	Daughter's son (m.s.) Daughter's daughter (m.s.)	*ākō*
Mother's mother	*kākō*	Daughter's son (w.s.) Daughter's daughter (w.s.)	*wandō*
Husband	*koitor*, or *mudyal* (old man)	Wife	*ār*
Wife's father	*māmā*	Daughter's husband (m.s.) Daughter's husband (w.s.)	*ande*
Wife's mother	*ātō*		
Husband's father	*māmā*	Son's wife (m.s.)	*koryārī*
Husband's mother	*ātō*	Son's wife (w.s.)	*koryārī*
Wife's elder brother	*erramtōgh*	Younger sister's husband (m.s.)	*erramtōgh*
Wife's younger brother	*errandi*	Elder sister's husband (m.s.)	*dādā* or *bātō*
Wife's elder sister	*ako'in*	Younger sister's husband (w.s.)	*pehā*
Wife's younger sister	*kōkkōrī*	Elder sister's husband (w.s.)	*dādā*
Husband's brother	*dādā*	Brother's wife (m.s.)	*koryārī*
Husband's elder sister	*ākkā*	Elder brother's wife (w.s.)	*ange*
Husband's younger sister	*kōkkōrī*	Younger brother's wife (w.s.)	*koryārī*
Wife's elder sister's husband	*aglā*		
Wife's younger sister's husband	*bātō*		
Husband's elder brother's wife	*ākkā*		
Husband's younger brother's wife	*kellār*		
Son's wife's father	*p'arī*		
Son's wife's mother	*ākkā*		

APPENDIX IV

NAMES OF MEN AND WOMEN

(a) *Hill Marias*

MEN (215)

Aitū (2)
Arjāhā
Bāghū
Baiyyā (2)
Bandē (3)
Bangā (3)
Banjar
Barangā
Bhōsā (5)
Birā
Bital (2)
Borangā (2)
Bōrkā
Buchā
Bungē
Bungrī
Burkā
Bursā
Dabbā (2)
Dallu
Dangī
Dēlā (3)
Dōbā
Dōgā
Dōgū
Dūgā (4)
Erkā (3)
Gabā
Gangā
Ghāsī (2)
Gillē
Gōndā
Gudī (2)
Gudrā (2)
Gurshā (2)
Hāghā
Harmā (5)
Hiriā (2)
Hungā (4)
Irkā (2)
Irpā (2)
Jallā
Kāmā (2)
Kandar
Kandī
Kāpā
Karēt
Karpā
Kēsā
Kēyē (4)
Khuria
Kohla (6)
Kōhlāl (3)
Kōlā (2)
Kōpā (2)
Kōplā
Kōriā
Kōrkē
Kōsā
Kūlē (2)
Kūmal (5)
Kundī
Kurwē
Kutkē (2)
Kuttā (2)
Lamrī
Mādī
Mahrū
Mallā (2)
Mārā
Māsā (5)
Mēsā (2)
Mēsō
Mirsō
Mōdē (3)
Mōrlēl
Mukkā (10)
Mullā (2)
Mullī (2)
Mūrā (16)
Murral (3)
Mūsrā
Narangō (2)
Nēndā (3)
Ōghā (3)
Pāndrū (3)
Pēdū
Pēndā (4)
Pōlā (4)
Rājū (2)
Rāmā (2)
Rēkā
Sobrai
Sūkhā
Udsā
U'ilē
Ungal
Usō
Ville
Wanjā (3)
Wārangē
Watē
Wijjā (6)

WOMEN (107)

Bandī (4)
Birē (4)
Bukē (2)
Būrgī (2)
Chērō (3)
Dāmē
Dōbē (2)
Dōpī (3)
Dughō (3)
Dūtī (4)
Ewadō (2)
Goghai (4)
Gudī (2)
Hidē
Hirē (6)
Ippō (4)
Kāhpē (2)
Kānē (4)
Kiringo
Kōhlē (4)
Kōwē (2)
Kume (2)
Kundī
Māsē (8)
Mēnē (3)
Mōrī
Mūrī (4)
Mūsrā (2)
Nēndō (4)
Pāklī (3)
Panō (2)
Pōrai
Pūsē (3)
Rēkō (3)
Sūtrī (2)
Wanje (3)
Wāghālī
Wijjē (4)

N.B.—The numbers in brackets indicate the number of persons bearing the name indicated in the total 215 men and 107 women taken into account. No number is given when the name occurs only once.

(b) Bison-horn Marias

MEN (236)

Aitū
Artī
Bāghā
Baihā
Bakkā
Bandā
Bandī (14)
Bēlā
Bhīmā (3)
Bōdā (3)
Bōngrī
Bortā
Budhī
Bugrī
Burrā
Chalkī
Chamrū
Chēwā (4)
Chūlā
Dēwā (9)
Dhūrwā (6)
Dōgī
Dōgōrī
Dōkā (2)
Dōlē (2)
Dōmē (2)
Dōrā (3)
Duggī
Dullā
Dūmā
Ediā
Gangā (6)
Ghāsī
Gōgē (8)
Guddī
Gandā
Gūrdām
Harmā (10)
Harrā
Hiriā (2)
Hirmā (7)
Hungā (6)
Hūrrā (5)
Indāmōkā
Indar
Jōgā
Jēngā
Kāmā (3)
Kānā
Kannā
Kēsā (2)
Khōjā
Khōtlū
Kōhlā
Kōlā (5)
Kōndā
Kōpā (3)
Kōsā (11)
Kōyē
Kummā
Kuttā (2)
Lakhmū (2)
Lakkā
Lingā
Mallā (2)
Mangrū
Markā
Māsā (15)
Mātā
Mēdhō
Mūkā (8)
Mundā
Mundrā (4)
Muttā
Nādī
Nandā (4)
Nangā
Pāndū (3)
Pandrū
Pisōrī
Pōdiā (2)
Pōnārī
Pōtā (2)
Rāmā
Rāmū
Risāmī
Rōdā
Saniāsī
Sikkā
Simā
Singā
Sukrā
Sūpā
Tāngrā
Tikrē
Tōkā
U'ikā
Ūsā (2)
Veddī
Vēlā (5)
Vētālē
Wāngrē
Wōdī

WOMEN (68)

Aitā
Bandē (2)
Bangē (4)
Bhairē
Būchē (3)
Budhnī (2)
Bullī
Dōmē (2)
Ērē (4)
Galpuē
Gangī (7)
Hirmē
Jimmē (3)
Kāmē (3)
Kōsī (4)
Māsē (12)
Mukke (2)
Mukī (8)
Muttī
Pīlī (2)
Pirī (2)
Sukrī
Tōrkī

N.B.—The numbers in brackets indicate the number of persons bearing the name indicated in the total 236 men and 68 women taken into account. No number is given when the name occurs only once.

APPENDIX V

ANTHROPOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF THE HILL AND BISON-HORN MARIAS

By Mr. RAMESH CHANDRA ROY, M.Sc., B.L.,
Joint Editor, *Man in India*

114 141 I ACCOMPANIED Mr. W. V. Grigson in his March 1934 tour in the Hill and Bison-horn Maria country of the Bastar State, and was able to measure 100 Hill Maria and 50 Bison-horn Maria males; a severe attack of fever unfortunately prevented me from measuring as many Bison-horn as Hill Marias. I measured the Hill Marias in the Abujhmar hills camps at Orcha, Adeq, Itulnar, Hikul and Handawada from these and adjacent Hill villages in the *parganas* of Chhota Dongar Mar, Kutru Mar, Bhairamgarh Mar, and Barsur (Dantewara) Mar. The Bison-horn Marias were nearly all measured in the camp at Aranpur in Dantewara tahsil, near the head of the pass leading down from the Dantewara plateau to the Dorla country of the Konta tahsil; the men were mostly from Aranpur and Chameli *parganas*. I append tables summarizing the results of my measurements; space has forbidden the reproduction here of the long tables of individual measurements, which I hope subsequently to publish elsewhere. I have followed R. Martin's anthropometric technique.

142 **General description**

141 Both Hill and Bison-horn Marias are generally of medium stature, though tall and short individuals are not uncommon. The mean heights of those measured were 162·7 cm. Hill, and 161·7 cm. Bison-horn Maria. They are very well built, with well-proportioned body and limbs. Their skin colour varies from pale wheat to light black (the actual figures were: out of 100 Hill Marias, 9 light brown, 60 brown, 16 dark brown and 15 light black; out of 50 Bison-horn Marias, 3 pale wheat, 5 light brown, 26 brown, 9 dark brown and 7 light [302] black). They have a thick growth of hair on the head, but often cut it short or even shave it in front and round the peripheral region of the head, leaving a long crown-tuft. They have very little facial and body hair, and even those who can grow sparse beards and moustaches often have them clean shaved. The hair is black or dark brown, and is wavy or curly.

142 Their foreheads are retreating, but straight foreheads are not rare; of 100 Hill Maria foreheads 16 were straight, 57 slightly

retreating and 27 retreating. The corresponding figures for 50 Bison-horn foreheads were 4, 35 and 11. The supra-orbital ridges are not generally as well developed as those of some other Pre-Dravidian tribes. 142

The eye-slits are straight, but oblique eyes occasionally occur. I did not see a single epicanthic fold, or even a tendency to one. The eyes are generally black, often with a reddish hue, but grey and dark brown eyes also occur. The nasal root is slightly or moderately depressed, with a straight nasal bridge, though a concave nasal bridge is not uncommon. The nose is rather broad with fairly broad nostrils.

The lips are as a rule thick, but thin and medium lips are also occasionally found. The lower lip is often slightly or moderately everted, or tends to be everted.

The face is frequently oval and prognathous, and the malars and zygomatic arches are generally well marked. The usual chin is oval, but square chins occur. The mandibular angle is rather broad, and the face in consequence pentagonal, round or square.

The women have generally a round or oval face, concave platyrrhine noses and everted lips. Their nipples are very big and plug-like, resembling those of Negro women.

Indices Analysis of the metric data gives the following results[1] :— 141

Cephalic Index. The classification of the men measured was :—

	Hill Maria	*Bison-horn Maria*
Dolichocephalic	75	30, or 60%
Mesocephalic	22	17, or 34%
Brachycephalic	3	3, or 6%
TOTAL	100	50

The Hill Maria cephalic index averaged 76·16 ± ·22, ranging from 67·5 to 83·2, and the Bison-horn Maria 76·21 ± ·27, ranging from 68·8 to 86·0.

Length-Height Head Index. The classification of the men measured was :—

	Hill Maria	*Bison-horn Maria*
Hypsicephalic	77	36, or 72%
Orthocephalic	18	14, or 28%
Platycephalic	5	Nil
TOTAL	100	50

---

[1] For classifications, see Haddon, *Races of Man*, pp. 10-12.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

141 *Altitudinal Index* averaged 65·11 ± ·24 for Hill Marias, ranging from 55·3 to 78·3, and 64·81 ± ·31 for Bison-horn Marias, ranging from 58·3 to 71·7.

Nasal Index. The classification of the men measured was :—

	Hill Maria	*Bison-horn Maria*
Leptorrhine	8	1, or 2%
Mesorrhine	58	30, or 60%
Platyrrhine	34	19, or 38%
TOTAL	100	50

The Hill Maria nasal index averaged 81·51 ± ·48, ranging from 61·1 to 97·7, and the Bison-horn Maria 82·9 ± ·65, ranging from 65·4 to 98·0.

Morphological Facial Index.[1] The classification of the men measured was :—

	Hill Maria	*Bison-horn Maria*
Hyper-europrosopy	11	5, or 10%
Europrosopy	28	18, or 36%
Mesoprosopy	31	18, or 36%
Leptoprosopy	26	8, or 16%
Hyper-leptoprosopy	4	1, or 2%
TOTAL	100	50

The Hill Maria morphological facial index averaged 85·63 ± ·33, ranging from 73·4 to 97·4, and the Bison-horn Maria 84·6 ± ·36, ranging from 76·1 to 96·7.

How far are the Hill and Bison-horn Marias alike in their physical features?

[142] **Comparison of Hill and Bison-horn Marias**

At first sight one notices that the Bison-horn Marias are a little lighter in skin colour than the Hill Marias. But if we look to the comparative tables (Tables I and II below) of the means with probable errors for the different absolute measurements and indices, we shall not hesitate to say that there is very little difference between the two. No doubt if we calculated the probable errors of the respective mean differences and co-efficients of racial likeness our calculations would reveal dissimilarities in most of their characteristics; but these dissimilarities would not be great enough to show any real difference between Hill and Bison-horn Marias. I have, however, refrained from calculating the respective probable errors of the mean differences and co-efficients of racial likeness, because if I

[text continues on p. 317]

---

[1] Martin, *Anthropometry*, Vol. I.

TABLE I

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF ANTHROPOMETRIC MEASUREMENTS OF 100 ADULT MALE HILL MARIAS

Measurement	Unit	Mean	Probable error of mean	Standard deviation	Probable error of standard deviation	Coefficient of variation	Probable error of variation
ABSOLUTE MEASUREMENTS							
Stature	cm.	162·70	±·37	5·56	±·27	3·41	±·16
Head height	mm.	119·93	±·46	6·79	±·32	5·66	±·27
Head length	mm.	185·39	±·41	6·11	±·29	3·30	±·18
Head breadth ..	mm.	138·71	±·30	4·51	±·21	3·25	±·15
Least frontal breadth	mm.	101·66	±·29	4·44	±·21	4·36	±·22
Bizygomatic breadth	mm.	132·17	±·37	5·54	±·26	4·19	±·20
Bi-gonial breadth ..	mm.	88·03	±·40	5·93	±·28	6·74	±·32
Inter-orbital length ..	mm.	32·23	±·17	2·58	±·12	8·00	±·32
Bi-orbital length ..	mm.	94·62	±·30	4·38	±·21	4·63	±·22
Nasal length	mm.	48·97	±·23	3·45	±·16	7·04	±·34
Nasal breadth ..	mm.	39·68	±·17	2·46	±·12	6·20	±·30
Nasal height	mm.	16·33	±·12	1·78	±·09	10·90	±·53
Nasion-prosthion length	mm.	65·60	±·29	4·22	±·20	9·26	±·44
Nasion-gnathion length	mm.	113·22	±·43	6·30	±·30	5·56	±·27
Nasal arc	mm.	110·05	±·40	5·87	±·28	5·33	±·25
INDICES							
Cephalic	—	76·16	±·22	3·30	±·18	4·33	±·21
Altitudinal	—	65·11	±·24	3·57	±·17	5·48	±·26
Nasal	—	81·51	±·48	7·06	±·34	8·66	±·41
Facial	—	85·63	±·33	4·93	±·23	3·73	±·27

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

141

Table II

Statistical Analysis of Anthropometric Measurements of 50 Adult Male Bison-horn Marias

Measurement	Unit	Mean	Probable error of mean	Standard deviation	Probable error of standard deviation	Coefficient of variation	Probable error of variation
Absolute Measurements							
Stature	cm.	161·70	±·47	4·90	±·33	3·05	±·21
Head height ..	mm.	117·14	±·47	4·90	±·33	4·18	±·28
Head length	mm.	181·38	±·52	5·50	±·37	3·03	±·20
Head breadth ..	mm.	138·46	±·53	5·53	±·37	3·99	±·27
Least frontal breadth	mm.	100·16	±·36	3·77	±·25	3·74	±·25
Bizygomatic breadth	m.m.	130·68	±·49	5·10	±·34	3·90	±·26
Bi-gonial breadth ..	mm.	86·50	±·43	4·54	±·31	5·25	±·35
Inter-orbital length ..	mm.	30·44	±·30	3·18	±·21	10·45	±·72
Bi-orbital length ..	mm.	92·82	±·34	3·60	±·24	3·42	±·23
Nasal length	mm.	49·04	±·31	3·24	±·22	6·61	±·45
Nasal breadth ..	mm.	39·84	±·25	2·57	±·17	6·45	±·44
Nasal height	mm.	15·86	±·17	1·74	±·12	1·10	±·07
Nasion-prosthion length	mm.	63·84	±·37	3·87	±·26	6·06	±·41
Nasion-gnathion length	mm.	110·40	±·46	4·81	±·32	4·38	±·30
Nasal arc	mm.	107·92	±·45	4·66	±·31	4·32	±·29
Indices							
Cephalic	—	76·21	±·27	2·81	±·39	1·56	±·11
Altitudinal	—	64·81	±·31	3·23	±·22	4·98	±·34
Nasal	—	82·90	±·65	6·86	±·46	8·26	±·56
Facial	—	84·60	±·36	3·76	±·25	4·44	±·30

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

had been able to measure 100 instead of only 50 Bison-horn Marias, their measurements might have averaged the same as those of the 100 Hill Marias measured. Yet from the data obtained we can fairly say that on the average both Hill and Bison-horn Marias are dolichocephalic, hypsicephalic, mesorrhinic (leaning towards platyrrhinic), europrosopic and medium-statured peoples. 141

What is the cause of the mesocephalic and mesorrhinic elements actually present in both the peoples? Is it not the outcome of the mixture of the dolichocephalic and brachycephalic elements on the one hand, and the leptorrhine and platyrrhine elements on the other, actually present in both? The dolichocephaly and platyrrhiny, the dark brown skin and other elements are probably the real characteristics of these pre-Dravidian (proto-Australoid) peoples. But how are we to explain the small proportion of leptorrhiny and brachycephaly and the large and mutually equal proportions of europrosopy, leptoprosopy and mesoprosopy in these two predominantly dolichocephalic and mesorrhine peoples? 144

Racial Affinities

Dr. Haddon[1] finds in the original pre-Dravidian Gond a Pareoean strain, which causes the brachycephalic head form, the broad prognathous face and the occasional obliquity of the eye-slits.[2] As against this theory it may be pointed out that there is an absence of the true epicanthic fold (at least I have found none), and of the yellowish skin, which are the main characteristics of the Pareoeans.[3] Moreover, the leptorrhine element in the Hill and Bison-horn Marias cannot be explained by such an assumption.

It is interesting to note that a good percentage of Marias also conform to Dr. Haddon's Dravidian[4] group in all essential characteristics, namely dolichocephaly, medium stature, oval face, mesorrhiny, plentiful wavy or curly hair, and brown skin of varying shades.

---

[1] Haddon, *Races of Man*, 1929, p. 20.

[2] Cf. Hutton, *India Census Report*, 1931, Vol. I: 'It also seems possible that the vague suggestion of the mongoloid, which is so often given by the appearance of the hillmen of Chota Nagpur, of Bastar State in the Central Provinces and of the Madras Agency tracts, may be due to a strain of Pareoean blood which has come in by sea from the east. One is insistently reminded in these areas of the Assam hill tribes, and both Haddon and Buxton have drawn attention to this strain, which struck the present writer quite independently and contrary to his expectations; and the admitted proto-australoid element in these tribes is no obstacle to this, since it must have extended at some period through what is now the archipelago to the Australian Continent, apart from the probability of its absorption on the mainland.'

[3] Haddon, ibidem, p. 32.

[4] Ibidem, p. 21.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

PH

It may thus not be unreasonable to infer that a basic pre-Dravidian (proto-Australoid) element in the Hill and Bison-horn Marias has been modified by a considerable Dravidian element, and tinged either with a Pareoean element, or, probably, with some Alpinic[1] element (cf. the presence of leptorrhine, hypsicephalic and brachycephalic elements in both Hill and Bison-horn Marias), or with both a Pareoean and an Alpine element.

---

[1] Haddon, *Races of Man*, 1929, p. 26.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

APPENDIX VI

LANGUAGE

IN Volume IV of the *Linguistic Survey of India*, Maria is somewhat 114
briefly discussed and considered to be a mere local dialect of Gondi,
'almost identical with the ordinary Gondi of the district'. The 197
only authority on the language mentioned in the *Survey* is Glasfurd's *Report on the Dependency of Bustar* (Selections from the Records of the Government of India in the Foreign Department, No. XXXIX, Calcutta, 1863); Appendix II of the report contains a 'Maria' vocabulary. But as Glasfurd called the Hill Maria 'Maree', his vocabulary obviously was not collected in the Abujhmar hills, but probably among the Bison-horn Marias of Dantewara and Bijapur tahsils. The specimen printed in the survey seems to me to be one from the Bison-horn Maria country, while the sketch of the Maria dialect at pp. 532-3 of Vol. IV of the *Linguistic Survey* deals obviously with the Bison-horn Maria dialect. In fact, I do not think that it has before anywhere been stated that there is a marked difference between the two dialects, so marked, indeed, that, as I have observed before, a Hill Maria and a Bison-horn Maria cannot understand each other's mother-tongue and have to communicate in Halbi. I am not qualified to speak in any detail of the differences between the two dialects. A collection of words will often show very marked similarities or identities, but the same word will often be very differently pronounced by a Hill and by a Bison-horn Maria. Inflexions are different, those of the Hill Maria being more similar to those used by the Gond of the plateaux of the Central Provinces, though much gutturalized, while those of the Bison-horn Marias are, presumably, influenced by Telugu contacts. And in general towards the north of Bastar the Hill Maria and the Muria indent on Hindi for words wanting in their mother-tongue, while the farther south you go the more you find the Bison-horn Maria indenting upon Telugu, though he also draws considerably on Halbi. The Bison-horn Maria's speech seems far more guttural than standard Central Provinces Gondi, but even he is amazed at the difficulty of the Hill Maria gutturals, and always compares Hill Maria speech to that of crows.

The volume of transcriptions and translations of Gramophone 194
Records of Languages and Dialects spoken in the Central Provinces and Berar, edited by the late Rai Bahadur Hiralal and published

194 in 1920 at the Madras Government Press, gives two Maria records, which appear to me to be Hill Maria, probably from the south of the Abujhmar hills. They are full of the gutturals *gh*, *kh* and *q* (of which the sounds are similar to the corresponding Arabic gutturals), but do not clearly distinguish the short, almost clipped short, sound of the vowel o (sometimes a also) which I have transliterated in the Glossary and elsewhere as ŏ and ă respectively, as in *ghatŏ* and *păghai*; unfortunately, there are few examples of these in my specimens below, though they certainly occurred in the speech of the storytellers; but my Hindi scribe had no sign to distinguish short o from long o, or this clipped ă from the ordinary short a which is understood between two consonants in Devanagari script. Undoubtedly, also, the vowel e is sometimes short and sometimes long in Maria, as in all Gondi, but it is almost invariably shown as long both in the gramophone record transcriptions and in my specimens.

The *Linguistic Survey* does not mention the only Maria grammar 114 which then existed, *A Manual of the Mardia Language* by A. A. 194 Lind, published in 1913 at the Mukti Mission Press, Kedgaon. This is a useful work in Bastar, but often exasperating in its deficiencies; the vocabularies and inflexions were collected in different parts among different tribes, and thus are often of little use when most needed. It does, however, attempt to record the gutturals of Hill Maria, and whenever the vocabulary gives alternative forms, one with a guttural and one without, the gutturalized form may be taken to be the Hill Maria form, and the other probably the Bison-horn Maria. The author rightly points out that the guttural Hill *gh* and *kh*, corresponding to Arabic *ghain* and *khe*, are often 'interchanged with' r and y respectively, meaning that where the Hill Maria e.g. calls his bark cloak ta*gh*āli, the Bison-horn Maria will say *tarāli*. He points out also the existence of a gutturalized h, which is pronounced almost like *kh*; for example the verb *vēhnā*, to say, is by many Hill Marias pronounced practically as vē*kh*nā, and I have so transcribed it in my specimens.

No authority has, so far as I recollect, pointed out one peculi- 194 arity that to some extent affects all Gondi speech, but is most marked in the pronunciation of Hill and Bison-horn Maria. That is the check, almost click, so common in the middle of long words, especially between the root of a verb and its inflexion. Sometimes I have indicated this by inserting a small a above and between two consonants; I think that an apostrophe in the same position would be sounder.

Towards the south, the Hill Maria often drops an initial h, and softens his gutturals nearly as much as his Bison-horn neighbour.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

104
194

I have tried in the specimens below and in transcribing the vernacular words used in the text of the book to follow the same orthography as the *Linguistic Survey*, with modifications as noted above. When no long or short sign is printed above a vowel, it is pronounced as an ordinary short vowel, not clipped. As a rough guide to pronunciation :—

Pronounce short a as the final a in America
,, long a as in fast
,, short e as in when
,, long e as the ea in great
,, short i as in bit
,, long i as ee in meet
,, short o as the first o in bottom
,, long o as in pope
,, short u as in put
,, long u as the oo in foot
,, ai as the English affirmative ay
,, au as the ow in cow

When a small a is printed above the line between two consonants, it is generally little more than a pause between syllables, the check already mentioned ; when it is so printed at the end of a word, it represents the short a sound without which, for example, it is almost impossible to pronounce a final consonantal y.

Cerebral t, d and r are printed with a dot below them, and nasal n with a long sign above it. The following points observed at pp. 4-5 of Volume I of Mr. C. G. Chenevix Trench's *Grammar of Gondi* apply to the Hill Maria dialect of Gondi also :—

(*a*) 'The -r is frequently rolled in Gondi as in English, and even before a consonant. . . . To avoid the appearance of affectation, single -r is written in the latter contingency. Thus, . . . though the -r in Dōrtōnā, = I am tired, first person singular perfect tense of Dōrrānā, = to be tired, is strongly rolled, it is written single. This tripping -r is characteristic of the language.'

(*b*) In all southern dialects of Gondi there is a tendency to cerebralise all -r's, i.e. to pronounce r as ṛ. (The Hill Maria goes further, and gutturalizes ṛ to *ghain*.)

(*c*) 'Similarly, in the oblique cases of nouns, d and ḍ are often interchanged and t and ṭ sometimes.'

(*d*) 'It is often impossible to say whether a vowel should be marked long or short.'

(*e*) It is doubtful whether initial o or e exist in the language. 'There is always a faint w sound before the o, and generally a half-uttered y precedes the e. Thus the Gond betrays his affinity to the Madrasi butler who pronounces " eight " " Yeight." '

(*f*) 'A similar " Madrasi " tendency is the addition of ŭ to final t, ṭ, d, ḍ and l. Ādŭ is often heard for ād, ōlŭ for ōl, āmmātŭ for āmmāt, tākālŭ for tākāl, the third person neuter singular of the future of tākānā, to walk.' Compare Hill Maria *maqsu* for Gondi mārs, = axe, himatu for himat as second person plural of the imperative of *hiyānā*, to go, in my specimens

197 192 It may be observed that in these specimens and in the *Linguistic Survey* records there is far less borrowing from Aryan languages than in the Gondi folk-tales, stories and songs printed in Volume II of Trench's *Grammar*. In my specimens there are two corruptions of English words which have become current through excise and police practice respectively, *bōtēl* (bottle) and *rapōṭ* (report). Fairly recent Hindi or Halbi borrowings (as distinct from long acclimatized words of Sanskrit origin like *mīn* (fish), *wijjā* (seed) or *bēsh* (good)) found in my specimens are *ḍōkrā* (old man), *ḍōkrī* (old woman), *dinām* and *dināl* (daily), *kabāṛ* (work), *khush* (pleased), *tiyār* (ready), *bichār* (thought), *milē-māsī* (together), *sarkār* (authorities), *lagē* (fastened), and *rāzī* (contented).

126 I have not collected any specimens of Bison-horn Maria language, nor have I the qualifications to attempt any sketch of the grammars of the two dialects. The Hill Maria specimens that follow were recorded under my supervision by Sampat Singh, my interpreter, in the villages of Orcha and Hikul in the Abujhmar hills in March 1934, the records being corrected with the aid of the Hill Marias in my camp.

TWO STORIES, FROM HIKUL VILLAGE

539

I. The Monkey Son-in-law

Unḍ nāgh mattā. Ḍōkri- mu'ittā mattā, ōrā unḍ miyāṛ
One village was. Old-woman-old-woman was, hers a daughter

mattā. Ad pīki layā mattā. Ḍōkri- mu'ittā ad pīki-tun
was. That girl maiden was. Old-woman-old-woman that girl

bōn-kē hēwā mattā. Unḍ mēṭā-tā unḍ kōwē ḍōkri-mu'ittā-
anyone-to giving-not was. A mountain-from a monkey old-woman-

nagā pīki-may^{e}dē lām wātā. Ḍōkri-mu'ittā
old-woman-to girl-for bride-servitor came. Old-woman-old-woman

kētā, 'Nimā bārā-kiyā wātōq, kōwā ?' Kōwā ittoq, 'Hillē,
said, 'You what-for have-come, monkey ?' Monkey said, 'No,

māmō, bēnōrē lām tās^{e}tēq, nannā paṛī tūngānā-may^{e}dē
father's-sister; anyone bride-servitor will-keep. I work doing-for

mandākān.' Dōkri-mu'ittā bichār kitā, 'Māwā-igā paṛī kiyānōr bōgh
will-stay.' Old-woman thought-made, 'Me-with work doer anyone

hillē; pīkin-may^{e}dē kōwā baranjā-tun tās^{e}kān.' Injōr vēhhtā,
not; girl-for monkey son-in-law-for I-will-keep.' Then she-said,

'Mākā paṛī kis, tihtānūr.' Kōwā-kn tāstōq. Kōwā vēhhtōq,
'Me-for work do, I-will-feed.' Monkey she-kept. Monkey said,

'Māmā, nā-kō unḍ maqsu par-sīm; pēndā narkān.'
'Father-in-law, me-to an axe made-give; penda-clearing I-will-cut.'

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

Kōwā-nā pōlō kēñj-si, mu'ittōr māṛōnagā unḍ maqsu banā-kīyā
Monkey-of saying having-heard, old-man blacksmith-with an axe making-do

vēḱḱātōq. Ogā māṛō tānā kōlā-bārā maqsu-nā kisī kōwāng-kō
said. That smith its handle-with axe having-made monkey-to

hittōq. Aske kōwā tānā māmān-tōnē vēḱḱātōq ki, 'Nākun jāwā
gave. Then monkey his father-in-law-to said that, 'Me-to gruel

aṭsi-sīm; nannā pēṅdā naṛkālāyᵃ dākān.' Mu'ittā-ḍōkrī
cooking-give; I penda-clearing to-cut will-go.' Old-woman-old-woman

vēḱḱātā ki 'Kōwā-tun jāwā himatu, aur pēndā naṛkālāyᵃ dāyānur.'
said that 'Monkey-to gruel give, and penda to-cut he-will-go.'

Aske narkōm pīkī jāwā kis-hittā. Jāwā pā'is, kōwā pēndā
Then in-the-morning girl gruel made-gave. Gruel having-taken, monkey penda

naṛkālāyᵃ hattōq. Pēndā naṛkālāyᵃ wiṛsī, kōwā rēkā tumrī
to-cut went. Penda to-cut having-neglected, monkey achar tendu

tindā-lāyᵃ marā mēṭā huṛtōq, wa pāyā mulpē maqsu-tun
to-eat trees mountain was-seeing, and afterwards at-evening axe

marā tōl-ā lagē-kisī lōn wātōq. Pīkī kōwān man-kīwō mattā.
tree bark-to having-fastened home came. Girl monkey liking-not was.

Onā paṛī-tun huṛsī, ḍōkrī ōnā miyāṛ-tun kētā, 'Huṛā, pīkī, kōwā
His work seeing, old-woman her daughter-to said, 'See, girl, monkey

baṛānjā nēhᵃnā kām kiyānōr, nimā ōn man-kēwīr.' Pīkī kēmēk
son-in-law good work will-do, you him liking-make-not.' Girl silent

ātū. Dinām kōwā jāwā kājsī kām kiyānā mayᵃdē hattōq. Unḍ diyā
was. Daily monkey gruel taking work doing for went. One day

māmāl kētōq, 'Nēnḍ nannā bārā pēndā huṛᵃlāsī ākān.' Kōwā
father-in-law said, 'To-day I also penda to-see will-come.' Monkey

kētōq, 'Nāṛ wā'iki.' Imā diyā ōnā māmā-kū kōwā
said, 'To-morrow come-please.' Next day his father-in-law monkey

nāṭēnā naṛkal pēṅdā-tun tōḱḱātōq. Mu'ittōr kabāṛ-tun huṛsī khush
of-the-village cut penda-to showed. Old-man work seeing pleased

ātōq. Pāyā ōgā lōn wās, ḍōkrī-tun kētōq. Mu'ittōr-nā pōlō
was. Afterwards he home having-come old-woman told. Old-man's word

kēñjsī mu'ittā bārā khush ātā. Nāṭēnōr pēndā bōṛsalāyᵃ
having-heard old-woman also pleased was. Villagers penda to-burn

handānā-askē kōwā bārā jāwā pa'is tiyār ātūr. Nāṭēnōr pēṅdā
going-when monkey also gruel having-taken ready was. Villagers penda

bōṛsatōq arū kōwā tumrī rēkā tindā ātūr. Nāṭēnōr kōhᵃlā bītānā-askē,
burnt and monkey tendu achar to-eat began. Villagers kutki sowing-when,

kōwā vēḱḱātōq, 'Wijjā parkā, māmā, nannā bārā bitᵃkān.'
monkey said, 'Seed look-for, father-in-law, I too will-sow'

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

Mu'ittōr wijjā parhakas hittōq. Kōwā wijjā-tun guppat-tagā
Old-man seed having-looked-for gave. Monkey seeds-to undergrowth-in

missī-hittōq. Missī pāyā lōn wās, 'bītān' injōrē
buried. Having-buried then home having-come, 'I-have sown' saying

ōnā māmā-tun vē*kk*tōq. Mu'ittōr ittōq, 'Pēndā huṛ^{a}lā dākōm,
his father-in-law-to told. Old-man said, 'Penda to-see we-will-go,

baṛānjā.' Indānkē, kōwā vē*kk*tōq, 'Dā'ī.' Kōwā
son-in-law.' He-having-spoken, monkey said, 'Please-go.' Monkey

munē munē, tānā māmā pāyā pāyā wītal pēndā hur^{a}lāsī
in-front in-front, his father-in-law behind behind sown penda to-see

hattōq. Kōwā askē munē tō*kk*as-mattōq, ad pēndā-tun ōs bēṛ
went. Monkey then before shown-was, that penda second time

tō*kk*tōq. Kōh^{a}lā mōṛas-mattā. Huṛtōq, payā milē-māsī lōn wātōq.
showed. Kutki sprouted-had. They-saw, then together home came.

Imā diyā kōwā ittōq ki, 'Māmā, nannā piṭṭē rākhā-may^{a}dē
Next day monkey said that, 'Father-in-law, I birds watching-for

pēndā-tagā dākān.' Ah^{a}lēkēn dinām jāwā tinjī kōwā pēndā-nagā
penda-to will-go.' Thus daily gruel having-eaten monkey penda-to

rākhā-may^{a}dē handōr. Agā kōwā nāṭēnā gōṛ-ku mēhtānā
watching-for used-to-go. There monkey of-the-village cattle grazing

pēkōr-nā pēndā bīt^{a}lē-tun tindūr. Ah^{a}lēkēn dinām tinjōr-mattōq.
lads-of penda the-sown was-eating. Thus daily he-kept-eating.

Pēkōr huṛtōq ki 'Māwā kōhalā-tun bātā lēkōrā dinām tintā?' Unḍ
The-lads saw that 'Our kutki what animal daily eats?' One

diyā pēkōr jamā wāsī bichār kitōq. 'Ayō, bōgā igā rākhā
day lads together having-come counsel took, 'No, someone here watching

man^{a}tu, askē huṛ^{a}kīṭ bātā tindāntā.' Imā diyā unḍ pēkā kōh^{a}lā-tagā
stay, then you-will-see what is-eating.' Next day a boy kutki-near

rākhā-mattōq. Askē kōwā garak-manj kōh^{a}lā tindā wātōq, bārā
watching-stayed. Then monkey soon-after kutki to-eat came, and

tindālāsī ātōq. Rākhā pēkā huṛsī ōnā sang^{a}tōr-kun vē*kk*tōq.
eating began. Watching boy having-seen his comrades-to told.

Imā diyā sabē milē-māsī kōwā-tun hawaktōq. Hawaksī-manj hachun
Next day all together monkey killed. Killing-after a-little

kōwā-tā awiṅg ōnā māmā-tun bārā pēkōr hittōq; ōgā tittōq.
monkey-of flesh his father-in-law-to also lads gave; he ate (it).

Mulpē ātā, matī kōwā ōnā māmānā lōn āwō ātōq. Askē ōnā
Evening came, but monkey his father-in-law's house not come. Then his

māmā parktōq. Munḍ nālū diyālā payā ōnā māmā-ku
father-in-law searched. Three four days later his father-in-law-to

yērkā ātā ki pēkōr hawaktōq. Ona māmā rām ātōr
known became that the-lads had-killed. His father-in-law angry became

pēkōr-nū vēḥḥtōq, ' Idēn nannā sarkār-tagā rapōt kīyā-kān.' Askē pēkōr
lads-to said, ' This I authorities-to report shall-make.' Then lads

bēṛatōq ittōq, ' Ayō, ilēhh kēmā ; māt bōgh ni-agā lām
were-afraid said, ' No, thus do-not ; of-us someone you-with bride-servitor

mandākōm. Askē mu'ittōr rāzī ātōq. Ūnd pēkā ōnēgā lām
we-will-stay. Then old-man content became. A lad his bride-servitor

mattōq, askē ōnā pīkī-tun ad lām pēkānā-tōghē marmī kis-hittōq.
became, then his girl-to that bride-servitor boy-with marriage made.

Lōn kis, tittōq.
House having-made, they-ate.

Free Translation

In a certain village an old woman had a maiden daughter, whose hand she would give to no suitor. A monkey came from a mountain to gain the girl's hand by serving for her. The old woman asked the monkey why he had come, and the monkey answered, ' Father's sister, if I could find anyone to give me his daughter as my wife after I have served him for her, I would stay with him and work for him.' The old woman reflected that she had no one to work for her, and determined to keep the monkey as a future husband for the girl. So she told him that if he would work for her, she would keep him. So she kept the monkey. The monkey then asked his future father-in-law to get an axe made for him to enable him to cut the trees for his *penda* cultivation. The old man ordered an axe from the blacksmith, and the smith duly made an axe complete with handle and gave it to the monkey. Then the monkey told his father-in-law that if he were given some cooked gruel to eat, he would go to clear the *penda* plot. The old woman told her daughter to make gruel for the monkey, so that he could go to work. So next morning the girl made gruel and gave it to the monkey, who ate it and went off to cut the forest for *penda* cultivation ; but he did no cutting, but searched the mountain-side for achar and tendu fruits to eat, and then in the evening left the axe in the bark of a tree and came home. The girl hated the monkey ; but when the old woman saw him return from work, she said to her daughter, ' Look, my girl, what good work this monkey son-in-law will do, and yet you dislike him ! ' But the girl kept quiet. Every day the monkey when he had had his gruel went off to work. One day his father-in-law said that he would go with him to see the *penda* cultivation, but the monkey suggested that he should wait till the morrow. The next day the monkey showed him the *penda* clearings that had been made by the villagers, and the old man, thinking he was looking at the monkey's work, was delighted, and went home and told his equally delighted wife.

When the villagers were going to burn the felled timber in the *penda* plots, the monkey took his gruel, and said that he was ready to go and burn his *penda* also, but while the villagers were busy burning theirs, the monkey was eating tendu and achar fruit. And when the villagers were sowing their kutki, the monkey said that he, too, was going to sow, and asked his future father-in-law to look out some seed for him. The old man found some seed and gave it to the monkey, but the monkey threw it away in the undergrowth, and came and told the old man that he had sown the seed. Then the old man said that he would go with the monkey to see the *penda* plot, and the monkey agreeing, they went off, the monkey leading, to see the sown field. The monkey again showed the old man the same plot which he had shown him before, on which the kutki had sprouted, and then they went back home.

Next day the monkey told his father-in-law that he would have to go up to the *penda* field to scare away the birds; and thereafter every day after his gruel the monkey used to go off on the pretence of watching the crops; but when he reached the *penda* fields, he used to eat the kutki growing on the fields of the boys who were absent grazing the village cattle. The boys observed that some animal was eating their crops, and one day consulted together, and decided to leave a boy there to see what happened to the crops. Next day, therefore, a boy was left to guard the *penda*, and soon after he had been posted he saw the monkey come and start eating the kutki. The watchman told the other boys, and next day all combined to kill the monkey; they gave a little of its flesh to the old man also, and he ate it.

When evening came but the monkey did not come home, his father-in-law searched for him, and three or four days later learnt how the boys had killed him. In a rage he told the boys that he intended to report their action to the authorities. They were frightened and begged him not to do this, promising that one of them should come and serve him for his daughter's hand. Then the old man was satisfied. One of the boys came to serve him to win his daughter's hand, and ultimately he married the servitor to his daughter, and the boy and girl made a house and lived there together.

II. Catching Peacocks

Uṅḍ nāṭē-nagā mu'ittōr mu'ittā mattōq. Mu'ittōr ōnā pēndā-nagā
One village-in old-man old-woman were. Old-man his penda-field-in

kōh^{e}lā biti-mattōq. Kōh^{e}lā pāṅd^{e}tā. Pāṅd^{e}tā kōh^{e}lātun mal tinjōr-
kutki sown-had. Kutki ripened. Ripened kutki peacocks eating-

mattā. Tān huṛsī mu'ittōr rākhā may^{e}dē dināl pēndā-tagā
kept. Them seeing old-man watching-for daily penda-field-in

mantoq. Und diya mu'ittor-tun ḍanḍ pōr^{e}tā; ōghu lōn handā parō-
was-staying. One day old-man-to fever arose; he home go could-

wātō. Askē ōnā mutī ittā, 'Nēnḍ mu'ittōr pēndā-tāhī bāhu wāyōq?'
not. Then his wife said, 'To-day old-man penda from why not-come?'

Onā huṛ^{e}lāsī mu'ittā pēndā-tēkē hattā. Agkā hanj huṛtā mal
His seeing-for old-woman penda-towards went. There having-come saw pea-

kōh^{e}lā tinjōr-mandē arū mu'ittōr kētul-nagā huñjas-mattōq. Askē
cocks kutki eating-were and old-man field-house-in sleeping-was. Then

ḍōkrī mu'ittōr-tun huṛsī kiltā. Askē mal mu'itta-ḍōkrī-
old-woman old-man seeing wept. Then peacocks old-woman

nagā wās vēhktōq bārā kētōq, 'Nimā bākā-kiyā kilintā?' Ḍōkrī
near coming spoke and said, 'You what-for weep?' Old-woman

ittā, 'Ayō, māwā mu'ittōr-tun ḍānḍ paṛtā; handā parōr. Nimā mēnd
said, 'No, my old-man-to fever has-come; walk cannot. You also

agkā hanj huṛā.' Mal kētu-dē-lōpā huṛ^{e}lāsī hattōq. Askē
there going see.' Peacocks field-house-inside to-see went. Then

ḍōkrā ittōq, 'Kētu-dā tāṭ kēh-sim.' Mal ittōq,
old-man said, 'Field-house-of mat-door shut.' Peacocks said,

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

539

'Dōkrī, id . mu'ittōr bāṭā intōq ?' Dōkrī ittā, 'Āyō, idēn
'Old-woman, this old-man what says ?' Old-woman said, 'No, him-to

sēhⁿnā ḍanḍ yē'itā, aur bāyⁿ ātōq.' Ḍōkrī kētu-nā ṭāṭ
severe fever has-come and alarm came.' Old-woman field-house-of mat-door

kēh-sitā. Payā ḍōkrā tēdsā sabē mal-dun hawaq-tōq. Payā mu'ittā
shut. Then old-man arose all peacocks killed. Then old-woman

mu'ittōr mal-dun pa'ls lōn wātōq tittōq.
old-man peacocks taking home came ate.

Free Translation

An old couple lived in a certain village. The kutki which the old man had sown in his *penda* plot had ripened, and as he had seen peacocks eating the ripe crop he was living in his field to guard the crop. One day he was attacked by fever and could not go home. His wife, wondering why he had not come, went towards the *penda* plot to look for him. When she reached the field she saw peacocks eating the crop and her husband lying in his field-house, and she wept at the sight. The peacocks came up and asked the old woman why she was weeping. She answered, 'Alas, my old man has fever and cannot walk; just go there and look at him.' So the peacocks went inside the field-house to see. Then the old man cried, 'Shut the mat-door of the field-house!' The peacocks asked the old woman what he had said, and she answered that he was in delirium from his fever. So saying, she shut the door of the field-house, and the old man sprang from his bed and killed all the peacocks. Then the old woman and he carried the peacocks home and ate them.

THREE SONGS FROM ORCHA

533
539

(*These are sung at weddings or at the Koqsar festival.*)

I

Refrain : Alēyⁿ rēlōyⁿ rē rēlōyⁿ rēlo,
ālēyⁿ rēlōyⁿ rē rēlōyⁿ rēlō !

Chorus : Pānḍōkā kusiñtā, dādā-lē, pānḍōkā kusiñtā !
(The racquet-tailed drongo is calling, my brothers !)

1. Bāṭāyⁿ pāṭā ōmtarā, layōrē, bāṭāyⁿ pāṭā-yē !
(Some-kind-of song sing, lads, some-kind-of song !)
Chorus.

2. Pūnōm, layōr, pūnōm-rā, layōrē, pūnōm, layōrē, pūnōm-ē !
(We-know-not, lads, know not, lads, know not, lads, know not !)
Chorus.

3. Adrām āyō, badrām, layōrē, adrām āyō, badrām ?
((If) thus not, how, lads, (if) thus not, how ?)
Chorus.

4. Jāwā lēwā āyō-rā, layōr-ē, jāwā lēwā āyō-yō !
(Gruel without not, lads, gruel without not !)
Chorus.

533
539

5. Bötēl dāṛengō jakmā-rā, layōr-ē, bötēl dāṛengō jakmā-yē !
(Bottle (of) wine intoxication, lads, etc.)
Chorus.

6. Māwāñg huṛa-lē āyō-rā, layōr-ē, māwāñg huṛa-lē āyō-rē !
(At-us look not, lads, etc.)
Chorus.

7. Ömṭarā, layōr, ōmaṭū, layōr-ē, ōmṭarā, layōr, ōmaṭū !
(Sing, lads, sing, etc.)
Chorus.

8. Āyār, dādā, āyōrā, layōr-ē, āyār ō-ō-yē !
(Ayar, brothers, ayora, lads, ayaro o ye !)
Chorus.

Free Translation

Aleya, reloya re reloya relo !
The racquet-tailed drongo is calling, brothers !
Sing us some kind of song, lads !
The racquet-tailed drongo is calling !
We know no songs, lads, we know no songs !
The racquet-tailed drongo is calling !
If we cannot sing thus, lads, how shall we sing ?
The racquet-tailed drongo is calling !
Without food we cannot, lads, we cannot sing !
The racquet-tailed drongo is calling !
If we drink we'll be merry, lads, merry !
The racquet-tailed drongo is calling !
Do not look at us, lads, do not look at us !
The racquet-tailed drongo is calling !
Sing, lads, keep singing, keep singing, lads, sing !
The racquet-tailed drongo is calling !
Ayār, brothers, āyōrā, oh lads eh ! āyār ō-ō-yē !
The racquet-tailed drongo is calling !

II

Kokoreng ko-reng !

Refrain : Alēya rē-lō-ya rē-lō !

Chorus : Kōkōrēng kōrēng ! (meaningless).

1. Bāroq banē māyō !
(What for was-not !)
Kōkōrēng kōrēng !
2. Wāṭarā, lāyōr, wāṭā !
(Come, lads, come !)
Kōkōrēng kōrēng !
3. Idrā pāṭā manō !
(This-kind song is-not !)
Kōkōrēng kōrēng !
4. Dūsar pāṭā ōmū !
(Another song sing !)
Kōkōrēng kōrēng !
5. Pāṭār ōmwāl, ātēkē.
(Song-singer is, then.)
Kōkōrēng kōrēng !

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

6. Wô wô wehtāñke āyô !
(Wo, wo we saying are not !)
Kôkôrēng kōrēng !
7. Wāyô-rā, layôr, wāyô !
(Not-come, lads, not-come !)
Kôkôrēng kōrēng !
8. Omarā, dādā, ômū.
(Sing, brother, sing.)
Kôkôrēng kōrēng !
9. Kañtīn duralā ôratū
(In-eyes dust has-fallen)
Kôkôrēng kōrēng !
10. Ôsār bhūmite ātēkē.
(Another's land, therefore.)
Kôkôrēng kōrēng !
11. Bāroq banē māyô !
(What-for was-not !)
Kôkôrēng kōrēng !

Free Translation

Aleya reloya relo
Kokoreng koreng !
Why are we not singing,
Kokoreng koreng !
Come, lads, come !
Kokoreng koreng !
This kind of song is no song.
Kokoreng koreng !
Sing a different song !
Kokoreng koreng !
If singers are here !
Kokoreng koreng.
Song out of time is useless,
Kokoreng koreng !
No one has come, lads,
Kokoreng koreng !
Sing, brothers, keep singing,
Kokoreng koreng !
Dust has fallen in our eyes,
Kokoreng koreng,
From singing in another's land.
Kokoreng koreng !
Why are we not singing ?
Kokoreng koreng !

III

(*Sung by dancers at the Koqsar festival only.*).

Refrain : Sōlāy^{a} rē rē lōy^{a} rē rē lōy^{a}, layôr, rē rē lō rē rē lōy^{a} !
Chorus : Kākāy, dādā-lē, kāpērā, layôr, kāpērā layôr-ē !
(Crow, brethren, night-jar, lads, night-jar, lads !)

1. Tēban pāgè gūranjôrā, layôr, gūranjôrā, layôr-ē !
(Above (?) rain is-thundering, lads, thundering, lads !)
Kākāy, etc.
2. Āl^{w}ēkā āyô āyô-rā, layôr, āyô-rā, layôr-ē !
(Thus not not, lads, not, lads !)
Kākāy, etc.

533
539

3. Adrâm âyō, badūrā, layōr, badūrā, layōr-ē ?
((If) thus not, how, lads, how, lads ?)
Kākāṛ, etc.
4. Wō'atī-tagânē mâtâlarā, layōr, mâtâlarā, lāyōr-ē !
(Veranda-in Mata-is, lads, Mata-is, lads !)
Kākāṛ, etc.
5. Râwaṛ-agânē pēn-ōrā, layōr, pēn-ōrā, lāyōr-ē !
(Shrine-in clan-god, lads, clan-god, lads.)
Kākāṛ, etc.
6. Uṭī-tagânē Tallōghā, layōr, Tallōghā, layōr-ē !
(Carrying-net-in Village-Mother, lads, Village-Mother, lads !)
Kākāṛ, etc.

Free Translation

Solaya re re loya, re re loya, lads O, re re lō, re re loya !
O the crow, brothers, O the night-jar, lads, O the night-jar !
The rain-clouds are thundering, lads, thundering on high !
O the crow, brothers, O the night-jar, lads, O the night-jar !
Do not sing thus though, nay, lads, no, nay, no, lads, do not sing thus !
O the crow, brothers, O the night-jar, lads, O the night-jar !
If thus we must sing not, lads, then how must we sing, lads ?
O the crow, brothers, O the night-jar, lads, O the night-jar !
In her veranda is Mātā, lads, the Mātā goddess, lads O !
O the crow, brothers, O the night-jar, lads, O the night-jar !
In his shrine is the clan-god, lads, the clan-god, O lads !
O the crow, brothers, O the night-jar, lads, O the night-jar !
In her net the Village Mother, lads, the Village Mother, lads !
O the crow, brothers, O the night-jar, lads, O the night-jar !

Four Riddles (*wesur*) from Hikul Village

Q. Ustā-nēdē gumchār bōṛē kōrintā ?
(Cow-dung) plastered (place)-on dove what crawls ?
What is the dove that struts on fresh cow-dung plaster ?
A. Ōṛā. (A boat.)

Q. Rēkā- ichōr puñgār, kauṛā- ichōr pēṛēm ?
(Leaf-hat as-big-as flower, cowry-shell as-small-as seed ?)
What is the seed as small as a cowry shell inside a flower as big as a leaf-hat ?
A. Bālō ; wad. (A spider in its web.)

Q. Hudilā pīlā mētā-tūn tochtōq ?
(Small child mountain wears-as-hat ?)
What is the child that wears a mountain on its head ?
A. Yēṭē. (A crab.)

Q. Ōnāgh nātēnā pōnāghī mārē-tē mēñj ?
(Any village-of green-pigeon feather-on egg ?)
In any village what is like an egg on the feather of a green pigeon ?
A. Nēl-Marrā. ((A fruit of) the *aonla* tree.)

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

104

APPENDIX VII

GLOSSARY OF VERNACULAR TERMS

[*Abbreviations* : BHM.= Bison-horn Maria dialect ; Chh.= Chhattisgarhi Hindi ; G.= Gondi ; H.= Hindi ; Ha.= Halbi ; HM.= Hill Maria dialect ; U.= Urdu.]

Āghā	(HM.) Husband's living and sleeping room.
āḥki	(HM., BHM.) A hole in the floor, used as a mortar in which grain is pounded with a wooden husker or pestle.
ākōmāmā	(HM., BHM.) See p. 199. A man may marry only from an *akomama* clan. In this work I have sometimes translated it as 'wife-clan', though, when a woman speaks of her *akomama* relatives, the right term would be 'husband-clan'; sometimes I have used of such relatives the term 'affines', using 'kindred' for relatives of *dadabhai* or brother clans, union with a girl of which is considered incest.
aigi	(HM.) Veranda.
alpanji	(HM.) A sleeping-platform.
angādi	(HM.) Women's kitchen and sleeping room.
ātē	(HM.) A bull-roarer.
Bāndā	(Ha.) A knife or bill, shaped like a dao.
bāri	(G.) A garden enclosure, generally behind the dwelling called *lōn-welung* or 'house-enclosure' by the BHM.
barnā	(Chh.) Bride-price. The BHM. use this borrowed term, or else the Hindi word *karcha*, meaning expenses.
begār	(H., Ha., U.) Forced labour ; the corvée.
Bherā Pen	(G.) The 'Great' or Supreme God ; originally, for the Gond of British India, the clan-god kept at the *pen-hara* or Holy Circle, as distinct from the *chuddur penk* (small gods) kept in the house of the head of each family.
bhūm	(Sanskrit and G.) Earth or land ; the earth-god.
bhūm-gaitā, or bhūmiā	Among HM. generally an alternative designation of the *kasyeq-gaita* or religious headman, but in a few HM. villages he is a separate functionary whose function is to lead the elders in deputation to the clan-god at the chief village of the clan. Among BHM., an alternative designation of the *permā*, or religious headman of the village.
bhūm-jāgā	(BHM.) The sacred plot of land set apart in the field of the *permā* or religious headman for certain religious ceremonies generally at the *pandum* festivals.
bisāha	(Ha.) Supplies requisitioned by State officials from cultivators. An old Sanskrit term for the twentieth part of the harvest, traditionally reserved for the pay of officers of the king.
biāsi	(Chh.) The puddling of rice-fields with a flat log drawn by oxen, to thin the young rice plants.
biryā-dōl	(BHM.) The large double-membrane drum used by Bison-horn dancers.
bohorāni	(Ha.) A disease-riddance ceremony.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

104

Chalki	(Ha.) An assistant of the *pargana* headman, generally hereditary.
chiptī	(Ha.) A lidded box, made of leaves on a framework of cane.
chuddur penk	(G.) The 'small gods' or penates of the Gonds of some districts of the Central Provinces.
Dādābhāī	(HM., BHM., G.) The term used for 'brother-clans'; see '*akomama*' above.
Dahi	(Ha.) A form of cultivation in which boughs and brushwood are brought from the forests and burnt on old fallow fields so that the ashes may serve as fertilizers. HM. and BHM. call it *parka*.
ḍeḍā'laō	(HM.) A leaf shield worn on the shoulders as a protection against rain.
Deo	(H.) A god.
Deo-kot	(Ha.) The sacred grove of a clan-god.
dhūmā	(Ha.) The ghost of a dead man; used by Halbi-speaking BHM. as equivalent of BHM. and HM. term *handī*.
dippā	(HM.) Flat forest lands, patches of which are used in rotation for growing crops in the ashes of the felled and burned forest growth. The BHM. term is *erkā*, and the Ha. term *marhān*.
ḍōḍī	(HM.) A field-house.
dolā-lon	(HM.) A menstruation hut.
Dor-bhūm	'Lowlands'; HM. use this name for the country of BHM. and Murias, and BHM. for that of the 'Dorla' tribe of South Bastar and the Godavari valley. The Dorla derives his appellation from the Telugu *dora*, meaning 'lord'.
ḍūḍī	(Ha.) A small earthen pot.
Erkā	(BHM.) See *dippa*.
Gaitā	(HM., Muria.) A headman.
Gāon	(H.) A village.
garh	(H.) A fort, or a feudal division of country.
gattā	(HM.) A dish-shaped brass gong.
ghāṭ	(H.) A mountain pass; used in Anglo-Indian speech of a chain of mountains such as the Eastern Ghats.
ghātō	(HM., BHM.) A thick porridge of rice or other grain, called in H. *bhāt*.
goriā	(HM., BHM.) A bridge pier consisting of a cylindrical bamboo basket filled with boulders.
gotal	(HM., Muria.) A communal village dormitory, used mainly by bachelors, but at times by all the males of the village, and used also almost as a men's club.
gotrā	(H., Ha.) A sub-division of a Hindu caste. It is used by Halbi speakers for the Maria clan.
gudapal	(HM., BHM., G.) Literally, 'tribe-milk', the term applied to the marriage of cross-cousins, and to the cross-cousins themselves. A in one generation marries B, the sister of C. The son of C regards the daughter of A and B as his *gudapal*, and is entitled to demand her hand in marriage or to demand compensation if she is married to someone else. By C's son marrying A's daughter, C's clan is repaid the 'milk' debt which A's clan incurred when A took B to wife from C's clan.
gudāri	(HM.) A hoe or mattock, called *hargudār* by the BHM.
guḍī	(Ha.) A hedge-temple.
guniā	(Ha.) One versed in *guni*, or magic spells.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

104

Hāiā	(HM.) A menstruation room in a house.
hanāl	(HM., BHM.) A past participial form of the verb *handānā*, to go, used of the Departed, or of the ghost of a dead man which is to be propitiated by appropriate ceremonies, and finally laid by the erection of a menhir.
hanāl-gaitā	(BHM.) Priest of the Departed.
hanāl-gattā	Wooden posts erected at the grave of a dead person.
hanāl-garyā	'Ghost-throne'; the small cromlech set up at the base of a *hanal-gatta* or a menhir.
handī	(H., Ha.) A large earthen pot.
harā-tindānā	(BHM.) 'Remains-eating'; the feast to which all friends and relatives are invited on the day after the *pandum* ceremonies which only members of the family may attend.
Jāgir	(U.) A Crown grant of land or of the right of collecting land revenue, generally as a reward for service rendered or to be rendered.
jarman	(Ha., HM., BHM.) 'German'; the word used for the aluminium alloy of which many bazaar ornaments, ear-picks, etc., are manufactured.
jāwā	(G.) The thin grain gruel called *pej* in H., Ha. and Chh.
jīwā	(G.) Personality, life, that which survives after death and is not malignant like the *hanāl*.
jīyā-bōāl	(HM.) The heir of a dead man.
Kāch-tendor	(BHM.) A jews-harp. (*Kach* means 'iron'.)
kadri	(BHM.) Knife (HM. *kasyeq*).
kadri-berā	(BHM.) 'Knife-field'; a piece of land in the field of the religious headman (*permā* or *kadri-gaitā*) set apart for certain religious ceremonies and sacrifices. It is also known as *bhūm-jāgā*.
kadri-gaitā	(BHM.) An alternative name for the *permā* or religious headman, corresponding to the HM. term *kasyeq-gaitā*.
kāghai	(HM.) An area set apart for *penda* cultivation when left fallow for a term of years to allow the forest growth to recuperate. It is called *hare* by BHM.
kal-burria	(BHM.) Wine-ladle.
kar'nu	(HM.) A threshing-floor.
kasyeq	(HM.) The knife carried in the loin-cloth in a wooden sheath.
kasyeq-gaitā	(HM.) The 'knife-headman' or religious headman of the HM. village, and *ex-officio* priest of the Village Mother. The word 'knife' refers to his sacrificial functions.
kattā	(BHM.) Clan. HM. and Gonds generally use the term *pārī*.
kotal	(HM., BHM.) A field-shed.
khandī	(H.) A measure of capacity, containing (in Bastar) 40 *paili* or 160 *soli*. A *soli* contains rice weighing 40 *tola* or slightly more than 1 lb. The *khandi* of rice thus weighs about 164 lb.
kochī	(HM.) A man's dancing-skirt.
Kōqsār	(HM.) The final harvest festival of the Hill Marias, in honour of the earth and the clan-god.
Koe, (plural Koeor)	(G.) Name used generally by all speakers of Gondi dialects of Hindus. Marias apply it generally to strangers.
Koe-gotul	(HM.) The strangers' rest-house, set apart in HM. villages for lodging State officials and other strangers who are not Koitor.
kosrā	(Ha.) The grain *kutki* (*Panicum miliaceum*).

kotōkāl	(HM.) The menhirs set up by the roadside to the Departed.
kupā-kelk	(BHM.) The knot into which a man ties his crown-tuft of hair.
kurmā-lon	(HM.) A menstruation hut.
kutki	(H.) The grain *Panicum miliaceum* called *hokalā* by Marias and Gonds, and *kosra* in Halbi.
kutmām	(BHM.) Phratry or group of clans, also called *tārr*.
Lamanā'l	(G.) A youth serving his future father-in-law for his daughter's hand when he cannot afford the usual bride-price.
lāndā	(Ha., BHM.) An intoxicating gruel, made from rice and *Eleusine coracana*.
leski	(HM.) A medium, employed as assistant by *waddai* or clan-priest.
lingam	(H.) A phallus.
lon	(HM., BHM.) House; the northern Gonds say *ron*.
lonā	(HM.) The inner room of the house, used for the cult of the Departed and as a store-room.
lotā	(H.) A small brass pot.
Machān	(H.) An elevated platform, set up in trees for shooting at big game, or in fields for watching crops.
māhuā	(H.) The tree *Bassia latifolia*. Its flowers are distilled to produce the chief intoxicating spirit of Central India.
mājhī	(Ha.) Headman.
māndā	(Ha.) Granary.
māndiā	(HM., BHM.) The grain *Eleusine coracana*.
mantram	(H.) A spell or religious formula.
māqqawādang	(HM.) Small brass wire rings worn in the helix of the ear.
māqsī	(HM.) An axe, called *maras* by BHM.
marhān	(Ha.) See *dippa*.
marmi	(HM.) Marriage, by the normal ceremony.
masni	(Ha.) A grass sleeping-mat.
mole	(BHM.) Taboo; the HM. term is *polo*.
Metābhūm	(G.) Highlands (*metā* (G.) means mountain); both HM. and BHM. call their country Metabhum and themselves Meta Koitor.
medul-waddā'l	(BHM.) A clan-priest.
moghī	(HM.) A dancing-shield.
mudang	(HM.) A garment worn by women, consisting of a square patch of cloth passed between the legs, and attached behind and in front to a cord or bamboo hooped around the waist and threaded through numerous brass rings.
mundā	(Ha.) A small irrigation tank.
mungyā	(BHM.) Bead-necklaces.
musal	(HM.) A club-shaped wooden husker or pestle, by which grain is pounded and husked in the *ākhi* hole in the floor. BHM. call it *uspāl*.
muyang	(HM.) Pellet-bells.
Nār or nāgh	(BHM., HM.) A village.
narmā-lon	(BHM.) Room in which women and infants sleep.
Nāgh-Talughī or Nār-Taluri	The Village Mother goddess of the HM.; BHM. generally use the Hinduized form Gaon Devi.
O'ldal	(G.) Hearth.
o kā	(Ha.) A gourd ladle.
oser	(BHM.) The veranda of a house.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

Padar	(Ha.) See *pāghal*. The term *Padar-rāj* applied by BHM. to the open well-settled country of the Jagdalpur tahsil may simply mean 'village-realm'.
pāghāl or **pāgh**	(HM.) A village site, one of the alternative sites in parishes where there is much shifting cultivation. BHM. use the Ha. *padar*, and Murias and some HM. *pāra*.
pagdāle	(HM.) A gourd ladle.
pagri	(H.) A turban.
paik	(Ha.) Originally a soldier of the medieval feudal militia of all the states of Orissa and Chhattisgarh; used in the *lingua franca* of Bastar of police constables, etc.
panchāyat	(H., Ha.) The council of village or caste elders, traditionally five (*pānch*) in number.
pandum	(BHM.) A first-fruits or new-eating ceremony.
pārad	(Ha.) See *nāte*.
parganā	(H.) A sub-division of a tahsil or zamindari, corresponding roughly to the ancient *garh*.
pāri	(G.) The word used by almost all Gondi speakers for the clan; BHM., however, call it *katta*.
pāring	(HM.) Bride-price.
parhā	(HM., BHM.) See *dahi*.
patwāri	(H.) Village accountant-surveyor, employed by State to maintain village assessment records and on settlement work.
pāyā	(BHM.) Parting of the hair.
pedā	(BHM.) Secular headman of village, corresponding to HM. *gaita*. The term is occasionally used by HM. also.
pedāwō'ghāti	(HM.) A menstruation hut or room.
pen	(G.) God. As used by HM. and BHM. refers to the clan-god.
pendā	(HM., BHM.) The chief form of cultivation among Marias. The method is that described for *dippa*, but *penda* lands are always steep hill-slopes, and generally have far longer fallow periods than *dippa* lands.
pendul	(BHM.) Regular marriage.
pen-gādwā	(G.) The clan-priest of the Gonds of the Nagpur and adjacent Central Provinces districts, who is the custodian of the *Bhera Pen* and the *pen-karā*, or Holy Circle.
pen-rāwar	(HM.) The clan-god's shrine or hedge-temple, generally called *deogudi* (Ha.) by BHM.
pen-waddāi	(HM.) The priest-medium of the clan-god.
permā	(BHM.) The religious headman of the village. See also *bhum-gaita* and *kadri-gaita*.
pharsā	(Ha.) A kind of axe.
pīrā-mānahā	(HM.) A disease-riddance ceremony, called *boharānī* in Ha., and *rog-barriā* by BHM.
pola	(HM.) Taboo.
pīrakong	(HM.) Rings or plugs worn in the lobe of the ear.
pūjāri	(H.) One who performs the *pūjā* or worship of gods.
pāpal	(G.) The pulse *urad* (*Phaseolus radiatus*).
Rau	(Ha., BHM.) Demons, chiefly of mountains and high places.
reking	(HM.) A large leaf hat used as protection against rain.
sāja	(H.) The tree *Terminalia tomentosa*, held sacred by Marias and all Gonds. (G., *mardi-marrā*.)
sāl	(H.) The tree *Shorea robusta*.
salphi	(Ha.) The sago-palm (*Caryota urens*) called *gorgā marrā* by Marias.
sāri-bāri	(Ha.) Village subscriptions of labour, supplies or money for communal or State objects; a corruption of an Arabic technical term.

siāri	(Ha.) The elephant creeper, *Bauhinia vahlii*, much used for making cord.
sūjā	(HM.) Iron hoops worn by women around their necks.
Tāghāli	(HM.) A raincoat made of strips of retted bark of the tree *Kydia calycina*, sometimes used also as a dancing-skirt for men.
tahsīl	(U.) A large sub-division of a district or State, administered by a *tahsildar*.
tallāgullā	(BHM.) The plumed bison-horn dancing head-dress of men.
talq-dā'inā	(HM.) Literally, 'going to ask'; used of the formal visit of a youth's parents to a girl's parents to ask for the girl's hand for their son. The BHM. call this *tālpānā*, or 'asking'.
talutār	(BHM.) A patterned brass snood, worn over women's hair.
tārr	(BHM.) = *kutumdam*, a phratry or group of clans.
thekadār	(H.) One who holds a village on *thekā* or lease from the State or a zamindār.
til	(H.) The oil-seed *Sesamum indicum*.
tirdudi	(BHM.) Woman's bamboo dancing staff, adorned with iron pellet-bells.
tiyā	(BHM.) Iron neck ring.
tokānā	(BHM.) Used of consulting the earth-god as to what sacrifice he demands by placing wet rice on the ground before a cock and reciting names of possible victims till the cock pecks up the rice; the god is held to want the victim last-mentioned.
tōpi	(H.) A hat; used by HM. of their dancing head-dress.
tōgā	(HM.) Tail; used of the end of the loin-cloth left to hang over the right buttock.
tori	(Ha.) The Muria hunting-horn.
tum	(HM.) A form of grass fencing.
turam	(HM.) A kettle-drum.
Uddam-garya	(HM.) The religious headman's seat of honour.
urad	(H.) See *pupal*.
uras-kal	(BHM.) = HM. *kotokal*, q.v. (from *urasad*, to bury, and *kal*, a stone).
uspāl	(BHM.) See *ussal*.
utāri	(BHM.) A brass fillet worn over women's hair.
Wetā	(BHM.) A ceremonial hunt, or *pārad* (Ha.); the most important is the *wijja-wetā*, or 'seed-hunt', preceding the sowing of the new harvest.
wijja	(G.) Seed; the Hindi *bīj*.
wijja-dodi	(HM.) A long-granary.
wijj-erka	(BHM.) 'Seed-*mahua*'; an alternative name for the *bhum-jaga* or *hadri-bera* plot in the *perma's* field set apart for religious ceremonies, which has generally on it a sacred *mahua* tree.
wijja-lon	(BHM.) Room in dwelling-house used as granary and for cult of the Departed.
wittō	(BHM.) A fringe of hair, left along the forehead.
zamindari	(U.) The estate of a zamindar, who in Bastar (as in the Central Provinces generally) is a subordinate chief, a survival of the medieval feudal chiefs subordinate to the Maharaja, holding a large estate on payment of tribute to the Maharaja or the Government, as the case may be.

113

APPENDIX VIII

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ball, V.	*Jungle Life in India*, London, 1880.
Blunt, Capt. J. T.	*Narration of a Route from Chunarghur to Yertnagoodum in the Ellore Circar*, 1795. (Reprinted in Wills, *European Travellers in the Nagpur Territories*, Nagpur, 1924, pp. 91-173.)
Cain, Rev. J.	'The Bhadrachalam Taluka, Godavari District, S. India' (*Indian Antiquary*, Vol. V, 1876, p. 357).
	'The Bhadrachalam and Rakapalli Talukas' (ibidem, Vol. VIII, 1879, p. 33 and p. 219; Vol. X, 1881, p. 221).
	'The Koi, a Southern Tribe of the Gond' (*Journal Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. XIII, 1881, p. 410).
	Also articles in the *Christian College Magazine* (old series), Vols. V, pp. 352-9, and VI, pp. 274-80.
de Brett, E. A., I.C.S.	*Chhattisgarh Feudatory States Gazetteer*, Bombay, 1909; in series of Central Provinces Gazetteers.
Elliot, Lieut. C.	*Report on the Bustar and Kharonde Dependencies of the Raepore District*, 1855 (Selections from the Records of the Government of India, Foreign Department, No. XXX, 1861).
Elwin, Verrier	*Phulmat of the Hills, a Tale of the Gonds*, London (Murray), 1937. (Chapter VI gives an Arcadian account of childhood under the *gotul* system of Bastar.)
Frances, W., I.C.S.	*Gazetteer of Vizagapatam District*, Madras, 1907.
Glasfurd, Colonel A. I. R.	*Musings of an Old Shikari*, London (Bodley Head), 1928.
Glasfurd, Capt. C. L. R.	*Report on the Dependency of Bustar*, 1862 (Selections from Records of the Government of India, Foreign Department, No. XXXIX), Calcutta, 1863.
	Report on Land Revenue Settlement of Upper Godavery District, Nagpur, 1868.
Grant, Sir C.	*Gazetteer of the Central Provinces*, Nagpur, 1870.
Grant.	'Political Survey of Northern Circars', appended to the *Fifth Report on the Affairs of the East India Company*, 1812; Madras reprint, 1883.
Grierson, Sir G., O.M.	*Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol. IV, Munda and Dravidian Languages.
Grigson, W. V., I.C.S.	Contributions to 'Notes on the Aboriginal Tribes of the Central Provinces' at pp. 72-3 and 80-5, *Census of India* 1931, Vol. I, Part III, Section B.
Hayavadana Rao, C.	'The Gonds of the Eastern Ghauts, India', *Anthropos*, 1907.
Hemingway, F. R., I.C.S.	*Gazetteer of Godavari District*, Madras, 1907.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

113

Hiralal, Rai Bahadur	*Inscriptions in the Central Provinces and Berar*, 2nd Edition, Nagpur, 1932. (Editor) Gramophone Records of Languages and Dialects spoken in the Central Provinces and Berar. Transcriptions and Transliterations. C.P. and Berar Administration, 1920. See also Russell, R. V.
Hislop, Rev. S.	*Papers Relating to the Aboriginal Tribes of the Central Provinces*, Nagpur, 1866.
Hutton, J.H., C.I.E., I.C.S.	*The Angami Nagas*, London (Macmillan), 1921. *Census of India* 1931, Vol. I, India, Part I, Report. Delhi, 1933; and Part III, Ethnographical, B. Ethnographic Notes. Delhi, 1935.
Jenkins, Sir R.	*Report on the Territories of the Raja of Nagpore*, 1827; Reprint, Nagpur, 1923.
Kedarnath Thakur, Pandit	*Bastar Bhushan* (Hindi History of Bastar), Benaras (Bharat Jiwan Press), 1908.
Lind, A. A.	*Manual of the Mardia Language*, Kedgaon (Mukti Mission Press), 1913.
Lucie-Smith, Major C. B., M.S.C.	*Report on Land Revenue Settlement of Chanda District*, Nagpur, 1870.
Marten, J. T., I.C.S.	*Census of India* 1911, Vol. X, Central Provinces and Berar, Part I, Report. Calcutta, 1912.
Russell, R. V., I.C.S.	*Census of India* 1901, Vol. XIII, Central Provinces, Part I, Report. Nagpur, 1902. (With Rai Bahadur Hiralal) *Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India*, 4 Vols., London (Macmillan), 1906.
Saxton, Col. G. H.	*Note on Survey Work done in Bastar in* 1868-9. (Selections from the Records of the Government of India, Home Department, No. LXXX, pp. 61-4, Calcutta, 1870.)
Shoobert, W. H., I.C.S.	*Census of India* 1931, Vol. XII, Central Provinces and Berar, Part I, Report. Nagpur, 1933.
Temple, Sir R.	*Report on the Administration of the Central Provinces up to August 1862*, (Reprint), Nagpur, 1923. *Reports on the Zamindaris and other Petty Chieftaincies in the Central Provinces in* 1863, (Reprint), Nagpur, 1923.
Thurston, E.	*Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, 7 Vols., Madras, 1909. (See especially article, 'Koya', in Vol. IV.)
Trench, C. G. Chenevix, I.C.S.	*Grammar of Gondi*, 2 Vols., Madras, 1919. (Obtainable Government Printing, Nagpur.)
Wills, C. U., I.C.S.	*British Relations with the Nagpur State in the Eighteenth Century*, Nagpur, 1926. *Early European Travellers in the Nagpur Territories*, Nagpur, 1924. 'The Territorial System of the Rajput Kingdoms of Medieval Chhattisgarh' (*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, new series, Vol. XV, 1919, pp. 197-262).

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32

Hill Maria

Bison Horn Maria

INDEX

000

(The abbreviations M, HM and BHM are used for Maria, Hill Maria and Bison-horn Maria respectively.)

Abnormalities, 261-2, 265-6.
Abujhmar hills, 5, 12, 22, 26-8, 30, 49, 91, 128, 141-6, 173, 236, 296.
Adeq village, 26-7, 91, 201, 237, 312.
Adultery, 224, 285, 295.
Agriculture :
  permanent, 125-6, 127; HM, 14, 144, 146-7; BHM, 147-50.
  shifting, 28, 38, 96; HM, 106-10, 125-41; BHM, 147-8, 190.
Agricultural Year, 129-41.
Ahiri *zamindari*, Chanda District, 26-7, 34, 50, 162, 286-8.
Akti (*Akhya Tritiya*) Hindu Festival, 165.
Allotment, of land for shifting cultivation, 130-1.
Amusements, 181-7.
Ancestors. *See* Departed and Genealogicial method.
Angami Nagas, 76, 83.
Animals, wild, shot out by M, 80-1.
Anklets, dancing, 81.
Annam Deo, Raja, 3, 4, 38, 39.
Antagarh, *tahsil*, 16, 22-3, 24-8, 33, 44, 49, 285, 288-9, 299.
Anthropometry, xi-xii, 48, 312-18.
Antlers, of spotted deer, in dancing head-dress, 81.
Ants, 117, 133, 153.
Approaches, of villages, 101.
Aranpur, *pargana* and village, 28-30, 56, 175, 203, 281, 312.
Ark clan, 201, 238.
Arrows, 84-8, 135, 168, 182, 187, 211, 264.
Arts, 82-3, 96, 187.
Assessment, land revenue, 141-6.
Atami clan, 199-200, 305, 306.
Atrami clan, 242, 235, 306.
Axes, 75, 83-4, 102.

Bachelors' dormitories. *See* Dormitory.
Bad deaths, 223, 230; HM, 279; BHM, 283.
Bailadila mountains, 23, 28-9, 30, 37, 91, 281.
Bamboo, 84, 106, 135, 163; food, 152; tubes, 70, 168.
  See also Drums, Fencing and Fire.
Banda, knife or dao, 83.
Banjara, carrying caste, 10-11.
Bari, gardens, 66, 102, 106, 119, 120.
Barkon, territorial division, 33-4.
Barsur, ancient kingdom, 4, 5.
  village, 26, 51-2, 220.
Barsur Mar (Dantewara Mar), *pargana*, 27 etc., 312.
Bardal, *pargana* and clan, 22, 26, 33, 70, 139, 141, 237-8, 275-6, 303.
Basketry, 70, 75, 80, 113, 117, 118, 136, 174-5.
Bastar State, area and population, 3, 299.
  ethnography, 35-57.
  geography, 20-34.
  history, 3-19.
Bathing, 65-6, 189, 215, 234, 235.
Bazaars. *See* Markets.
Beads, 27, 45, 71-3, 96, 267.
Beans, 51, 134, 148.
Begar. *See* Forced labour.
Behramar *pargana*, 22, 23, 26, 33, 162, 275, 276, 277, 278.
Bells, xiii, 45, 52, 73, 76, 81.
Benur, village and *pargana*, 25, 44.
Betrothal, HM, 248-9; BHM, 251-3, 293.
Bewar, type of cultivation, 126.
Bhairamgarh, market village, and Mar *pargana*, 4, 27, 163, 220, 312.
Bhairam Deo, Raja, 14, 16, 198.
Bhangaram, god, 193.
Bhamragarh, village in Ahiri, 22, 23, 26, 27, 163, 164.
Bhattra, race, 16, 35, 36, 37-41, 43, 186.
Bhera Pen, god, 46, 194.
Bhiji, *zamindari* and village, 4, 32.
Bhimul, god and cult, 206, 215, 219-20.
Bhopalpatnam, *zamindari*, 10, 18, 27, 28, 30-1, 288, 299.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

001

Bhum (Earth), 9, 119, 125, 130, 138, 176, 193, 195-206, 230, 236, 242.
Bhum-gaita (Earth-priest), 109, 138, 139, 196.
Bibliography, 337-8.
Bijapur, *tahsil*, 5, 18, 23, 28, 30-1, 299.
Birds, as pets, 163.
Bird-lime, 153, 158.
Birth, of children, 65, 67, 224; HM, 261-9; BHM, 269-70.
Birth-marks, 265.
Bisaha. *See* Forced supplies.
Bison-horn head-dress, 79-81.
Bison-horn Marias, 8, 12, 16, 23-[illegible], 44, 47, 221.
  general account, 53-7.
  for details, *see* subject headings.
Blacksmiths, xiii, 37, 50, 56, 65, 67, 81-2, 83, 87, 90, 175-[illegible], 183.
Blood, used to fertilize seed, xiii, 212-13, 220, 221.
Blunt, Captain, 10-11.
Boar tushes, 81.
Boda, Kalmu, headman of Barsur *pargana*, xix, 159-60, 200.
Bohorani, ceremony. *See* Ceremonies, disease-riddance.
Bond service, 14, 18.
Bottada, race. *See* Bhattra.
Boundaries, 39, 101, 131, 132, 140, 148.
Bows, 81, 84-8, 155, 187; use for music, 88.
Bracken, 152.
Branding, 174.
Brass-work, 65, 68, 71, 73, 75, 81, 171, 179-80.
Bride-price, 182-3, 247; HM, 249-50; BHM, 252-3, 254, 256, 294.
Bridge building, 93.
Bridges, 101-2.
Buffaloes, 162.
Bullocks, 95.
Bull-roarers, 183.
Burial. *See* Funeral.
Butler, Sir Montagu, xvi, 174.
Byres, 120.

Cain, the late Rev. J., 54-5, 94.
Cairns, 101, 139, 283.
  See also Stones for dead.
Calendar, 129.
Canoes, 164.
Capture, marriage by, 247, 260.
Carrying sticks, 63.
Carts, 63, 122.
Cash, 142, 144.
Castor-oil plants, 104.
Castration, 161.
Cats, 163.
Cattle, 101, 122, 136, 142, 145, 146.
  byres, 120.
Cauterization, 174.
Central Provinces Census Report, 1911, 34, 286-8.
  Census, 3, 32, 36-8, 46, 49-51, 53, 145, 154.
  Gazetteer (Grant's 1870), 12.
Central Provinces States, xvi, 35.
Ceremonies:
  age, 265.
  agricultural, 45, 130, 133, 134-5, 137-41, 206, 208-21, 289, 291.
  changing clan of widow on remarriage, 261.
  death and funeral, HM, 271-9; BHM, 279-83.
  disease-riddance, 101, 140, 174, 193, 290.
  first-fruits, 125, 134, 137-41, 165, 169, 198, 208-11, 215-18.
  fishing, 165-6, 209.
  hunting, 39, 154, 158-9, 211-14, 219, 269.
  naming, HM, 265-7; BHM, 270.
  new tanks, 170.
  palm-trees, 169.
  rain, 132, 206, 219-20.
  village-shifting, 109-10, 122-3.
  weaning, HM, 267, BHM, 270.
Chaitan Singh, the late Circle Inspector, xviii, 167.
Chakrakot, medieval kingdom, 4.
Chalukya kings, 3, 4.
Chanda District, 10, 22-3, 25, 26-7, 28, 143, 239, 286-8.
  Marias, 38, 69-70, 202, 286-8, 306.
Character, of M., 27, 91-7.
Charcoal, 176-7.
Chaurasi (traditional land division of 84 villages), 33.
Chhattisgarh Feudatory States Gazetteer, 46, 77, 102, 127, 150, 193, 195, 200, 227.
Chhindwara, Central Provinces District, 147, 239.
Chhota Dongar, village and *pargana*, 6, 26-7, 33, 44-5, 62, 63, 91, 224, 234, 236-8.
Child marriage, 250, 295.
Children, 46-7, 66, 112, 263-70. *See also* Birth and weaning.
Chintalnar, former *zamindari*, 4, 31.
Chitrakot, falls of R. Indrawati, 21-3, 24.
Cholera, 93, 279.
Christian converts, 224.
Chudur Penk, domestic ('little') gods, 194-5, 239.

d00

Clans, 51-2, 119, 193-205, 233-46, 288-9, 300-7.
  areas, 45, 119, 138, 200-1, 234-43, 279, 286-8, 289-91.
  gods, 45, 51, 104, 106, 123, 125, 132, 137-40, 193-205, 224, 226, 239-41, 246, 264, 272, 277, 292.
  priests, 57, 104, 110, 137-8, 196, 199, 226, 240, 246, 271, 239, 283.
  worship, 137-40.
  change of, by widow, on remarriage, 261.
Cleanliness, 65-7, 120, 189.
Climbing, 63.
Clogs, 127.
Cloth, 65, 68-9, 253, 274.
Clothing, 63, 173, 274; HM, 68-77; BHM, 77-81.
Clouds, 230.
Cock-fighting, 162, 186.
Codes, Indian Penal, Criminal Procedure and Civil Procedure, unsuitable for aboriginals, 15, 95, 285, 296.
Colour, M, sense of, 96.
Combs, 68, 73.
Communism, of M, 97, 102-3, 125, 130-1, 145.
Confederations, primitive, of tribes, 36.
Cooking, 104, 113, 124, 132, 135, 139, 151-2, 153-4, 158.
Co-operation, 97, 125, 130-1, 136, 137, 249, 292.
Coops, chicken, 104.
Cots, 64, 271.
Couvade, HM, 265; BHM, 270.
Cowries, 63, 69, 80.
  as currency, 18.
Cows, eating of, 43, 44, 162-3, 278-9, 282.
  export of, 162.
  hides of, 117, 177, 181.
  milking, of, 50, 122, 146, 162.
  ploughing with, 50, 146, 162, 188-9.
  sacrifice of, 162-3, 215, 223, 225, 278-9, 280-2.
  tending of, 50, 146, 162-3, 188-9.
  theft of, 163.
Cremation. *See* Funeral.
Criminal jurisdiction, 95, 284-6, 295-7.
Cromlechs. *See* Stones for dead.
Crops, 119, 133-6.
Creepers, cord, 80, 85, 113, 117, 133, 154.
Cross-cousin marriage, 234, 236-7, 247, 294.
Cultural parallels, xi-xiv, 220.
Curiosity, 92-3.

Dahya, form of cultivation, 38, 126.
Daily routine, 187-9.
Dancing, of HM, 45, 74-6, 83-4, 137, 139-40, 183-5, 267, 269, 278-9.
  of BHM, 51-2, 63, 79-81, 160, 183, 185-6, 213, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220-1, 255-8.
  of Parjas, 41.
  of Jhoria Murias, 45.
  -dress, 41; HM, 74-6; BHM, 79-81, 174, 274-5.
  -sticks, 81, 181, 185.
Dandami (name for BHM), 12, 51.
Danteshwari, State goddess, 5, 7-11, 104, 205.
Dantewara Mar, *pargana*, 27-8, etc.
Dantewara, *tahsil*, 23, 28-9, 299.
  temple and village, 4, 5, 7-11, 16, 221.
Dasehra, festival, Hindu, 91, 190, 220.
Days of week, 187, 267.
Defecation, 64, 66, 265.
Deformities, 230, 261-2, 266.
Democratic ideas, 289-90.
Demons, 206, 261, 270.
Dhaurai, market village, 63, 71, 73, 162.
Dhur, division of Gonds, 50.
Dhurwa, alias of Parja, 36, 39.
Departed:
  Association of, with clan-god, 205, 223-4.
  Cult of, xii, 114, 123-4, 133, 139, 216, 217-9, 222-5, 254.
  Fear of, 125, 139, 154, 222-4, 246, 272, 277.
  Hearth of, 114, 139, 190, 222-5.
  Libations to, 170, 216, 217-19, 222-3, 252, 253, 254, 282.
  Memorial stones for, xii, 45, 96, 139, 154, 163, 170, 200-1, 223, 224-5, 243, 273-83.
  Pot of (*kanal kunda*), 114, 124, 133, 139, 216, 218-19, 222-3, 278, 282-3.
  Priest of, 213, 217, 222.
  Rebirth of, 223.
  Room of (*lona*), 114, 123-4, 133, 216, 253, 254, 278.
  Offerings to, 114, 139, 209, 216, 217-9, 222-3, 242-3, 273-4, 275-6, 277-9, 280-3.
  See also Funerals.
Digging-sticks, 90, 131, 282.
Dippa, form of cultivation, 126-7.
Divorce, 261-2, 293, 295.
Doctor Deo, godling, 193.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

00

Dogs, 163.
Domestication of animals, 161-3.
Domestic gods, 194-5, 239.
Doors, 115-6, 118, 123.
Dorbhum (lowlands) and Dor Koitor, 49-50.
Dorla, tribe, 11, 32, 51, 52-7, 235, 240.
Dormitory:
  bachelors' (*Koitor-gotal*), xii, 44, 45-7, 64, 102, 104, 109, 110, 112, 118, 122, 132, 138, 187, 264, 267-9.
  for non-Koitor visitors, 106, 122, 292.
Dress, 45, 64; HM, 68-77; BHM, 77, 81.
Drinking, 170-1.
  See also Intoxicants, Landa, Mahua, Salphi and Toddy-palm.
Drumming, 139-40, 160, 181-3, 184, 185, 255-8, 267, 271, 279-80.
Drums:
  bamboo, 182, 267.
  double-membrane (*dol*), 52, 63, 81, 181-2, 279-80.
  gourd, 182.
  single-membrane (*turam*), xii, 118, 140, 168, 181-2.
Dummagudam, town in E. Godavari Agency, Madras, 28, 173.
Duns, employment of Gharwas as, 179.
Dwarfs, 262.

Ear-rings, 72-3, 78-9.
Ear-scoops, 79.
Earth. *See Bhum.*
Earth-eating, oath, 96.
Earth-god (Dhania Deo), 219.
  See Bhum.
Earthworks, 146-7.
East Godavari Agency, Madras Presidency, 4, 28-32, 35, 40, 55-6, 172-3.
Eastern States Agency, 3, 35.
Eating, 117, 135.
Eclipses, 230.
Education, 16, 267-9.
Eggs, 103, 122, 130, 140, 166.
  See Sacrifices.
Eickstedt, Professor Baron Egon von, xi, xvi, 48.
Elders, 284-94.
Eleusine coracana (mandia), 134, 148, 169-70.
Elliot, Lt. C., 8, 11, 142, 337.
Elopement, 259-60, 261-2, 295.
Elwin, Verrier, xi, 337.
Endurance, 60-4, 128-9.
Enmity, 94.
Erka, type of cultivation, 126-7, 147-8, 149.
European, early visitors of Bastar, 10-13.
Excise policy, xv, 15, 18.
Exogamy, 51, 199, 224, 235-6, 244-6, 291.
Eye complaints, 161, 173.

Fagan, the late Colonel, 15, 77.
Famine, 151.
Farsal, clan and *pargana*, 22, 26, 33, 52, 237, 275-6, 303.
Farsigotal *pargana*, 22, 33, 275, 276, 303.
Fear, 91, 92.
Felling, forest for shifting cultivation, 131.
Festivals:
  Jhoria Muria, 45.
  HM, 133-4, 137-41.
  BHM, 137, 208-21.
Fencing, 131-2, 148, 174.
  bamboo wattlework, 102, 118, 132, 148.
  brushwood, 148.
  grass (*tum*), 115, 118, 132, 146.
  log, 135.
  pile-stockading, 132, 147.
  pole-stockading, 106, 147, 136.
  wattlework, 117-8, 132.
  sielma (horizontal poles), 132, 146.
Ferry dues, 163.
Feuds, 94.
Field-houses and shelters, 129, 132-3.
'Fifth Report,' quoted, 10 (footnote).
Fire and fire-making, xii-xiii, 64-5, 131-2, 189-90.
Firing *penda* fields, 131-2.
Fish, fishing and apparatus, xiii, 117, 138, 163-8, 209.
Food, 90, 103, 117, 135, 136, 188-9.
Food gathering, 92, 151-4, 169.
Forced labour (*begar*), 14, 16, 18, 43, 143, 197, 284.
Forced supplies (*bisaha*), 14, 16, 18, 141-2, 284.
Foreigners, exploitation of Bastar by, 14, 16, 18, 42, 143.
  See also Hinduization.
Forest produce, 92, 117, 123-4.
Forest reservation, 16.
Forests, 25, 128-9.
Forest-spirits, 206, 211-12, 213, 214.
Frankness, natural, of M, 95, 144.
Fraser, the late Sir Andrew, 15.
Freedom, M, love of, 96.
Frogs, eaten, 158.
Fun, M, sense of, 95.

Funerals, 64, 76, 92, 170, 176, 186, 222-5; HM, 271-9; BHM, 279-83.
Fungus, edible, 152.
Fusion of cultures, xi.
Future life, M, ideas of, 224-5.

Gadba, Mundari-speaking tribe, 42, 69.
Gagra (weapon), 83.
Games, 186-7, 269.
Gangalur, *pargana*, 204.
Garh, ancient territorial division, 5, 6, 32-4, 42.
Garhai, clan messenger, 290.
Gayer, Mr. G. W., former Administrator of Bastar, 16.
Genealogical method, 233-4.
Gharwa (Ghasia) brass-workers' clan, 65, 71, 73, 75, 81, 124, 171, 179-80, 291-2.
Ghotpal, village, 51, 204, 217.
Gidam, market village, 28, 71, 163.
Gifts, 97.
Girdles, 69.
Glasfurd, Capt. C. L. R., former Deputy Commissioner of Sironcha, 7, 8, 12-14, 27, 32, 42-3, 44, 53, 54, 57 (footnote), 68-9, 74, 77, 80, 88, 91, 193, 200, 225, 226-7, 319, 337.
Glasfurd, Colonel A. I. R., 80-1, 337.
Goats, 120, 162, 239.
Godavari, river, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 28-32, 35.
  navigation scheme, 12, 13, 17.
  District Gazetteer, 55.
God-groups, Central Provinces Gond, 194-5, 239.
Gods. *See* Bhangaram, Bhera Pen, Bhimul, Clan-gods, Danteshwari, Isparal, Lingo, Pen, and Part IV generally.
Gogunda, village and hills, 24, 31, 32.
Golapalli, *pargana*, village and hills, 24, 29, 32.
Gold, used in purification ceremony, 192.
Gond race, 10, 25, 35-7, 42, 46, 47, 53, 56, 76, 77, 147, 193-5, 202, 239, 243, 244.
Gondi language, 4, 5, 35, 38, 42, 43, 55, 319-30.
Gongs, xii, 182-3.
Gotul. *See* Dormitory.
Gotal, clan, 237-8, 303.
Gottawar tribe of Gonds, 53-5.
Gourd drums, 182.
Gourds and gourd implements, 66, 118, 124, 134, 148, 171.
Grain, kinds of, grown by M, 133-6, 147-50.
Granaries, HM, 75, 102-3, 112, 117-18, 269; BHM, 120, 123-4, 133.
Grass, thatching, 115, 135.
  seeds used for food, 152-3.
Gratitude, 97.
Grazing rates, 145.
Greetings, 97, 257.
Grierson, Sir G., O.M., *Linguistic Survey*, 6, 38, 39, 319-20, 337.
Grinding, 113, 124, 139, 189.
Grubs, as delicacies, xiii, 153.
Gum, 153.
Gume clan, 109, 198-9, 200, 201, 236-8, 243, 288, 305.
Gunia (sorcerer); 174, 228, 283.

Haddon, *Races of Man*, 48, 313, 317, 318.
Hafting, 83.
Hail, 230.
Hair, 66, 67-8, 88.
Halba, tribe, 5-6, 37, 42, 149, 198, 226.
Halbi language, 6, 38, 42, 95.
Hanal. *See* Departed.
Handawada village, 107-13, 312.
Hareli, festival, 214-15.
Hare-lip, 230, 261-2, 266.
Hares, 135, 155.
Harvest-home. *See* *Koqsar* and Ceremonies.
Hawking (falconry), 163.
Head-hunting, xiii.
Headmen, *pargana*, 94, 196, 284-97.
  village, 14, 18, 95, 102, 103, 110, 112, 130, 140-6, 196-7, 284-97.
Hearths, 111, 113, 114.
Hell, 224.
Herdsmen, 101, 122, 146.
Highlanders, 49-50, 55.
Hikul village, 95, 103, 312.
Hill Marias, 22-3, 25-8, 44-5, 220.
  general account, 49-53.
  for details, *see* subject headings.
Hinduization, 36, 38-9, 43, 49, 70, 76, 91, 173, 217, 220-1, 225, 250, 266, 296.
Hoes, 89-90, 127, 146, 147.
Honesty, of M, 95-6, 102.
Honey, 153.
Hornbill, 81.
Horns, hunting, 179, 183.
Hoshangabad, Central Provinces district, 136, 147, 163.
Hospitality, 97.
Houses, 66, 103; HM, 110-17; BHM, 119, 120-4.
  contents of, 116-17, 122-4.

008

Hukkagotal, *pargana*, 22, 26, 33, 275, 276, 303.
Huker clan, 135, 237, 304.
Human sacrifice, xiii, xviii, 6-9, 193.
Humour, M. sense of, 93, 95.
Hunting, 39, 84, 154-61, 211-14, 219, 269.
Husking. *See* Grinding.
Hutton, Dr. J. H., xvi, 48, 76, 83, 90, 114, 317.
  author of Introduction, xi-xiv.
Hydrocele, 48, 173.

Ignorance, of foreigners about Bastar, 3, 10, 13.
  of Hindus, etc., about M, 3, 12, 27, 68-9, 142, 143, 172, 173, 225.
Impotency, sexual, 261, 262.
Improvements, agricultural, 146.
Incest, xiii, 245-6, 291.
Individualism, 97, 120, 125.
Indrawati river, 10, 17, 21-3, 30.
Influenza, 1918 epidemic, 174, 200.
Inheritance, 294-5.
Injection and inoculation, 172, 173.
Insanity, 262.
Intermarriage of M with fishermen, 163; with blacksmiths, 175-6.
  of HM and BHM, 51, 198.
Intoxicants, 71, 168-71, 186.
  See also Drinking.
Iron, use of against magic, 283.
Iron-work, 175-9.
Irrigation, 146-7, 149-50.
Ispural, Supreme Being, 224, 230.

Jagdalpur, capital of B[illegible]tar State, 4, 17, 43, 220.
Jagdalpur, *tahsil*, 4, 16, 21, 24-5, 36, 38-44, 91, 203, 299.
Jaggergonda, village, 5, 28, 195.
Jail, 94, 97.
Jalkamani, water-spirit, 166, 206.
Japgunda, village, 140, 198.
Jaralur. *See* Kuruk.
Jātā clan, Jātālūr village, 96, 199 (footnote), 238, 304.
Jātā Pandum, BHM festival, 219.
Jātē clan, plural Jātērōm, 135, 199, 237, 238, 239, 240, 304.
Jāti clan, Jātwara *pargana*, 22, 33, 199 (footnote), 236, 302.
Jenkins, Sir R., Resident at Nagpur, 3.
Jews-harps, 183.
Jeypore (Orissa), 8, 10, 13, 18, 21, 23-4, 33, 36, 38, 39, 49, 57.
Jhoria, group of Murias, 23, 44-7, 195.
Jhorian, *pargana*, 33, 45.
Jiwa (personality, life), 67, 225.
Jugho clan, 201, 237, 238, 239, 243, 301-2.

Kaghai (shifting cultivation site), 107.
  See Village shifting and Agriculture.
Kakatiya dynasty, 3-4.
Kammar caste. *See* Blacksmith.
Kanker State, Eastern States Agency, 5, 10, 12, 25, 44, 46.
Karangul village, 105-6.
Kare Pandum festival, 219.
Karhatti, type of cultivation, 149.
Karnatak rajas, 4.
Kasyeq-gaita (religious headman), 96, 102, 103, 106-7, 110, 130-2, 136, 138-41, 143, 176, 190, 196-205, 284-97.
Katakalian, *pargana* and village, 4, 23, 28, 128.
Keskal, village and pass, 23, 193.
Khond race, xiii, 220.
Killepal, *pargana* and village, 23, 30, 203.
King-crow, 188.
Knives, 70, 81-3.
Kohana, type of cultivation, 149.
Koitor, true name of Gond race, 35-6, 54-5, 147.
Kolab-Sabari river, 11, 18, 21, 23-4, 32, 36.
Kondagaon *tahsil*, 16, 24-5, 45-50, 299.
Konta *tahsil*, 18, 23-4, 28-30, 31-2.
Koqsar festival, 130, 134-5, 137, 139-41, 185, 201, 220, 248, 290.
Korku tribe, 36, 136, 163.
Korta Pandum, BHM festival, 218.
Kosor, Gondi appellation of Hindus, 71, 106, 292.
Koora, grain. *See Panicum miliaceum*.
Kotapalli-Pamer, *zamindari*, 4, 31, 299.
Koya, race, 4, 5, 24, 35, 37, 44, 47, 53-7.
Kuakonda, *pargana* and village, 4, 23, 28, 122, 128, 162, 204, 220.
Kuhrami phratry and clan, 203-4, 281, 306.
Kukanar, market village, 32, 162.
Kurmer, village, 62-3, 96, 111-12.
Kuruk, M fishing tribe, 163-4, 261.
Kurum Pandum, BHM festival, 215-18.
Kutki, grain. *See Panicum miliaceum*.

000

Kutru Mar, *pargana*, 27, 277, 278, 312.
Kutru, *zamindari* and village, 4, 11, 18, 27, 28, 29-31, 162, 163, 202, 288, 299.
Kutul, village of Bardal HM clan, 139, 141.

Ladders, 153.
Le'i, type of cultivation, 149-50.
Lamana'i (suitor serving father for hand of daughter), 107, 250-1.
Landa (fermented rice gruel intoxicant), 94, 124, 139, 148, 169-70, 185-6, 210, 252-9, 280, 281, 282.
Land revenue, 141-6, 149, 162, 236.
Language, 221, 319-30.
Lard, 161.
Leaf-boxes, 118.
Leaves, for cleansing, 66.
  for clothing, 68.
  as plates and utensils, 140, 152, 171.
Legends, 46, 51, 57.
Lekami, clan, 204.
Leski, medium, 110, 227, 271.
Libations, 170, 216, 222, 252, 253, 273-4, 282.
Lightning, 223, 230.
  death from, 283.
Lind, A. A., *Manual of Mardia Language*, 320, 338.
Lingagiri, *pargana*, 31.
Lingo, epic of, 46.
Linguistic Survey, 319-20, 337.
Log-gods, 42, 197-8, 226.
  See Clan-god.
Lohar. *See* Blacksmith.
Loin-cloths, 63, 65, 69, 71, 77-8.
Lowlanders, 49-50, 54-5.
Lucie-Smith, Col., author of Chanda (1869) Settlement Report, 22, 46-7, 91, 194, 338.

Madness, 262.
Maggots, in wounds, 291.
Magic, 67, 94, 95, 104, 168, 174, 176, 220, 225-8, 272, 280, 283.
Mahra, weaving and menial caste, 37, 65, 291.
Mahua (*bassia latifolia*) :
  flowers and fruit as food, 124, 151, 175.
  liquor distilled from flowers, 139, 151, 169, 170-1, 186, 210, 248-54, 269, 274, 277, 282.
  seeds, 124, 167.
  tree in religion, 206, 208-9, 274.
  wood used for charcoal manufacture, 176, 178.
Maize, 148.
Majhi (headman), 288.
Malkangiri (*taluq* of Jeypore), 57, 90.
Mandai Jatra, festival, 214, 219-20.
Mandia, grain. *See Eleusine coracana.*
Mangnar, *pargana*, 27, 69, 132, 135, 162, 236-8.
Mangoes, 151.
  first-fruits ceremony, 165, 209-11, 282.
Manufactures, 65.
  See Basketry, Brass-work, Iron-work, Knives.
Marathas, 5-7, 10-11.
Marhan, type of cultivation, 126-7.
Maria, general account, 49-50.
  difference between HM and BHM, 194-5, 220-1, 312-18.
Markami, phratry and clan, 204, 306.
Markets, 50, 62-3, 71, 73, 117, 124, 136, 144, 153, 162, 163, 174.
Marriage, 137, 140, 170, 181, 183, 186, 229, 233-4, 240, 244-62, 269, 293, 294.
Marten, the late Mr. J. T., C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., quoted, 34, 286-8.
Marvi, phratry, 204, 306.
  clan, big and small, 203, 281.
Mata, goddess and cult, 205-6, 213, 215.
Matlaghat hills, 24-5.
Mats, 64.
May, Mr. James, former Diwan of Bastar State, 17.
Meals, 135, 188-9.
Measures and measuring, 136, 174-5.
Medieval territorial systems, 4, 32-9, 290.
Medical relief, 16, 93, 172-4.
Medicine, 153, 158, 161, 172, 173-4, 225, 227-8, 270.
Mediums, 110, 138, 174, 176, 186, 196, 214, 217, 226-8, 229, 270, 271-2.
Megalithic culture of M, xii, xiii.
  See Cairns, Stones for dead, Stone-seats, Village mother.
Melo (BHM equivalent of HM *polo*), = Taboo, q.v.
Memory, 199, 233-4, 265-6.
Menhirs. *See* Departed, memorial stones for.
Menstruation, xii, 65, 104-6, 112, 115, 120, 135, 224, 263-4, 265, 269, 295.
Mental processes, 65, 92-3.
Meriah ritual, xiii, xviii, 220.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

000

Metabhum (' Highlands '), 49.
Methodists, 224.
Mice, 135, 141, 157, 158.
Migrations of tribes, xi, 46, 48-9, 55, 204-5.
Militia, medieval *paik*, 6, 42, 106.
Milk, libations, 282.
  use in purification ceremony, 292.
Milking, 162.
Milky Way, 230.
Mirthul *pargana*, 31.
Mitchell, Dr. W. P. S., M.B.E., State Medical Officer, xix, 174, 166-7.
Mitchell, the late Surgeon-Major, 16.
Modul-maddai, 57, 289.
  See Clan-priest.
Mohammedans, invasion of Bastar by, 3, 5.
Moieties, 235-8.
Money, 124, 136, 144.
Mongoloid element in M, xii, 317.
Monkeys, eaten, 158.
Months, names of, 129, 187.
Moon, 129, 187, 230.
Mountain demons, 206.
Mourning, 92, 271, 275-6.
Mudang belt, part of female's dress, xii, 65, 71, 265.
Murder, 94-5, 168, 187, 226-7, 234, 262, 272, 283, 285, 289, 292, 294, 295.
Muria, tribes of Gonds, 6, 16, 37, 83, 84, 286.
  games, 186-7.
  general account, 42-3, 48-9.
  numbers, 49.
  Jagdalpur Murias, 43-4.
  Jhoria Murias, 44-5, 308.
  Gotul Murias, 46-8, 187, 308.
Music, 96.
Musical bow, 88.
Musical instruments, 181-3.
Mustard, 148-9.

Nagas (of Assam), xii-xiv, 47, 76, 83.
Nagpur, Central Provinces district, 19, 76, 147, 194, 239, 244.
Nagpur, Lord Bishop of (Rt. Rev. Alex Wood, D.D.), xvi, 194.
Nagvansi Kings, 4.
Nahal, wandering hunters, 88.
Nails, finger, 66.
Nakedness, 65-6, 71, 78.
Names, 95, 265-7, 268, 270, 310-11.
  dormitory names, 268-9.
Naraimpur, village, 25, 44, 45, 62, 71, 274.
Natural phenomena, 206, 230.
Nature spirits, 166, 206, 230.
Navel-cord, 264-5, 270.
Nelasnar, market village, 163.
Nets, for game, 84, 158, 159-60.
  for fish, 164, 165-8.
  miscell., 117.
Nicknames, 95.
Nugur village, 102, 106, 111-12, 180, 264, 275.
Nuka Nordana Pandum, festival, 218-19.
Numeration, 129.
Nurbhum, *pargana*, of Nuroti clan, 26, 33, 162, 268, 276, 278, 304.

Oaths, 96.
Obscenity, at HM dancing, 185, 186.
  at BHM marriage, 255, 257-8.
Offerings to dead. *See* Departed.
Officials :
  pargana, 52, 284-97.
  State, 14, 62, 106, 137, 141-6, 289-90.
  village, 102, 122, 131, 141-6, 284-97.
Oil, 151.
Omens, 103, 122-3, 211-12, 229-30, 251.
Opium, 71.
Orcha village, 27, 91, 94, 103, 107, 110, 140, 154, 198, 233-4, 265-6, 274, 279.
Ordeal, trial by, 246, 293.
Orissa States, 35.
Ornamentation, 68, 82, 83, 96, 115, 138, 187.
Ornaments, 45, 68, 267, 294, 295.
  HM, 71-6, 267, 271.
  BHM, 67-8, 78-81.

Padalibhum, *pargana* of Padal clan, 26, 33, 162, 187, 268, 269, 276, 278.
Padar Raj, BHM name for Jagdalpur *tahsil*, 203.
Paddles, of canoe, 164.
Pagk'i (alternative village site). *See* Village site.
Paknar village, 128, 162, 280, 283.
Palace service, 42, 43, 49.
Palas tree (*butea frondosa*), 149.
Palm trees, 123, 153.
  See also Salphi, Sindi, Toddy-palm.
Panchayat, xii, 15, 18, 33, 95, 208, 229, 236, 248, 284-97.
Panda Baijnath, Rai Bahadur, 39, 235-6.

Panicum frumentaceum (*ghatka*), 134, 137, 148.
  miliaceum (*kutki*), 103, 134, 137, 147, 169-70.
  miliare (*chikma*), 134, 137, 148, 215.
Panther-trap, 156-8.
Paralkot, village and former *zamindari*, 4, 25, 26, 50.
Pargana, territorial division, 5, 6, 15, 22, 26-7, 32-4, 284-97.
Parja, tribe, 16, 25, 35, 36, 38-41.
Parji, dialect of Gondi, 39-41.
Parka, form of cultivation, 126, 147, 150.
Parllo clan, 96, 105-7, 162.
Parrots, 163, 188.
Partition, 294.
Paspalum scrobiculatum (*kodon*), 134.
Pastimes, 181-7.
Paths, 101.
Patwardhan, Rev. S. G., 194-5.
Peacocks, associated with the dead, xii, 273.
  in folk-tale, 326-7.
  feathers used on arrows, 87.
Pada, 102.
  See Headman and Officials (Village).
Pedigrees, 233-4, *facing* 306.
Pen, clan-god. *See* Clan-god.
Penda, shifting cultivation of hill slopes, 126-9.
  See Agriculture, shifting.
Pen-karsita festival, 214, 220.
Pen-rawar (clan-god's temple), 106, 138, 140, 194, 204, 217.
Perma (BHM village-priest), 122-3, 165-6, 176, 190, 196-206, 208-20, 242, 289.
Pestles. *See* Grinding.
Phratries, 194-5, 202-5, 235-46, 290, 306-7.
Physical attitudes, 64, 190.
Physical features, xi-xii, 45, 48, 53, 61-2, 312-18.
Physical powers, 62-4, 190.
Pig-food, 103.
Pigs, 138, 161, 267, 278, 281.
Pig-sties, 103, 120.
Pile-building, 117.
Pira-mansha ceremony. *See* Ceremonies, disease-riddance.
Placenta, 264, 265.
Plastering, 66-7, 113, 120.
Playthings, 187.
Ploughing, 95, 122, 125, 127, 148-50, 188.
Poison, for arrows, 160.
  for game, 160-1.
  for fish, xiii, 164, 167.
Police, dislike of M for, 95, 141.
Poll-tax settlement of Abujhmar hills, 50, 126, 136, 141-6.
Polo (' forbidden '). *See* Taboo.
Population. *See* Census.
Pork, 27, 161.
Poroja, Madras name for Parja tribe, q.v., 35.
Pottery, 180-1.
  drums, 182.
Poultry, 103, 104, 117, 161-8.
Pregnancy, 223, 230, 263-5, 269-70, 279, 283.
Property, 120, 293-5.
Pubic hair, 94.
Pulses, 134, 135, 137, 148.
Purification, 246, 287, 288, 291-3.
Python, as food and medicine, 158.

Quail, 159, 163.
Quivers, 88.

Rabies, 174.
Racial affinities, xi-xiv, 317-18.
Rage, fits of, 94.
Railways, 17-18.
Rain-bow, 230.
Rain-ceremonies, 206.
Rain cloaks and hats, xii, 63-4, 76-7, 113.
Raja-Muria, 36.
Raj-Gond, 36.
Rao, Mr. C. Havavadana, 49 (footnote).
Rats, 153, 158.
Raw. *See* Demons.
Rawat (cattle-tending caste), 50, 106, 122, 146, 163
Razors, 67.
Reaping, 133, 135-6.
Rebellions, 14, 16-17, 141, 143.
Recreations, 186-7.
Reincarnation, 266.
Relationship terms, 244-5, 308-9.
Rest-houses, 106, 122, 164.
Revenge, 94, 187-8.
Rheumatism, 173.
Rhinoceros, 154.
Rice, 25, 38, 102, 118-19, 126, 128, 137, 141-2, 144, 149-50.
Rice-beer. *See* *Landa*.
Rings, 71.
  in marriage, 245, 256.
Roads, 13, 17-18, 24-6, 28-30.
Roofs, 114.
Ropes, 117, 118, 153.
Roy, Mr. R. C., xi-xii, xix, 48, 61.
  author of Appendix V, 312-18.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

000

Rudra Pratap Deo, the late Raja, 14.
Ruling Chief and family, 3-7, 13-15, 42, 142, 193, 198, 286.
Running amuck, 94.
Russell and Hiralal *Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces*, xvi, 5, 46, 113, 115, 142, 193, 194, 224, 229, 235, 239, 240, 243, 260, 266.

Sacred thread, sale of right to wear, 39.
Sacrifices, 104, 130, 132, 138-41, 165, 169, 190, 208-9, 209-20, 270, 273-4, 277-9, 281-3.
Saja tree (*terminalia tomentosa*), 104, 110, 115, 123, 130, 133, 138, 149, 176, 186, 195, 197-8, 209, 215-16, 219, 273, 274, 279, 282.
Salphi tree (sago-palm; *caryota urens*), xii, 136, 181.
  as food, 152, 168.
  liquor from, 136, 152, 168, 224.
Salt, 13, 27, 175.
Salutations, 97, 257.
Sandals, 70, 117.
Sari-bori (village subscriptions), 14, 209, 212, 292.
Sawara (tribe), xii, 90.
Scarecrows, 133.
Sendhia (or *Sethia*), clan or caste headman, 286-8, 292.
Service for bride, 107, 250-1.
Sexes, segregation of, 65-6.
Sexual continence, 109, 113, 133, 134-5, 137, 138, 208, 211.
Sexual intercourse, xii, 65, 109, 113, 133, 134-5, 186, 213, 224, 263, 268-9.
Sexual training, 268-9.
Shaving, 67, 200, 292.
Shields, dancing, 45, 52, 75-6, 118, 275.
Shyness, 91-2, 144.
Sickles, 135.
Silk, 82, 86, 153.
Sindi tree (date-palm), 169.
Singing, 96, 184-6, 255-8, 269, 327-30.
Skin diseases, 70, 173.
Sleeping, 64, 65, 112-13, 117, 118, 120, 124.
  in fields, 63, 109, 132-3, 134.
Smallpox, death from, 279, 283.
  See also Vaccination.
Smelting. *See* Ironwork.
Snakes, as food and medicine, 158.
Social offences, 286, 291-2.
Social organization, 233-43, 300-7.
Sedi, phratry and clan, 204, 240, 241, 242, 306.
Sonpur Mar, *pargana*, 26, 33, 162, 275, 276, 277.
Sores, 172.
Sororate, 245.
Sowing, 127, 129, 133-4, 135, 147-8, 149-50.
  See also Ceremonies.
Spears, 84, 160.
Squirrels, flying, 158.
Stacks, 133, 136.
Stars, xiii, 230.
Stilts, xii, 140, 187.
Stone-seats, xii, 96, 102, 130, 141, 290.
Stones for dead, xii, 45, 96, 139, 163, 170, 200-1, 223, 225, 243, 273-83.
  for dead panther, 154.
Strangers, attitude towards, 27, 91-3, 95.
Streets, village, 102, 120.
Stringed instruments, 88, 182-3.
String figures, 186.
Subscriptions. *See* Co-operation and *Sari-bori*.
Sukma, *zamindari*, 4, 18, 24, 28, 32, 36, 39, 299.
  the late Zamindar, 174.
Sun, in ceremonial, 210.
  considered a man, 230.
Survey, of India, 22, 56, 299.
Swastika, 74, 96, 115.
Syphilis, 172.

Taboos (HM *polo*, BHM *welo*), xiii, 62, 64, 106, 109, 112, 113, 114, 115, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 144, 181, 182, 207, 208, 219, 224, 239, 263, 264-5, 269-70, 271, 276.
Tales, 269, 322-7.
Tally-strings, 187-8.
Tamarind tree, 151.
Tangri Dongri hills, 24, 30.
Tanks, 146-7, 150.
Tapalibhum, *pargana* of Tapa clan, 22, 26, 33, 162, 187, 268, 275, 277, 303, 304.
Tattooing, 62, 74.
Teeth, 62.
Teknonymy, 244.
Telam village, 120-1.
Telanga (Telugu) race, 5, 24, 220-1.
Teli traders, 102, 239.
Telinghat hills, 24.
Telugu influence, 5, 24, 53-7, 220-1.
Thatching, 103, 115, 120, 123, 269.
Theft, 93, 163, 213.
Thekadari system, xi, 14, 18, 142-3.

ddd

Threshing, HM, 136 ; BHM, 137.
Thunder, 230.
Thurston, *Tribes and Castes of Southern India*, quoted, 54.
Tigers, as avengers of offences, xiii, 291.
  eating of animals killed by, 162.
  method of hunting, 159-60.
  poisoning, 160-1.
  persons killed by, 279, 283.
Time, reckoning of, 187-8.
Tiralgarh hills, 283.
Tirathgarh, village, 4, 28.
  seat of legendary tailed kings, 4, 204.
Tobacco, 102, 118, 119, 148.
Tobacco boxes and tubes, 70.
Toddy-palm (*borassus flabellifer*), 151-2.
  as food, 168.
  sacrifices to, 220.
  tapped for liquor, 168-9.
Tokalor (Tailed) clan, 69, 135, 237, 304.
Tomatoes, 148.
Tondawada village, 91, 95.
Tools, 81-90, 132.
Toothpicks, 79.
Totemism, general, 204, 207.
  among Bhattras, 39.
  BHM, 204, 240-2.
  Dorlas, 240.
  HM, 239.
  Murias, 43, 235.
  See also Appendix II, 300-7.
Toys, 186.
Trapping, 154-61.
Traps, for birds, 153, 158.
  for deer, 155-6.
  for fish, 164-5.
  for hares, 155.
  for panthers, 156-8.
Trench, Mr. C. G. Chenevix, C.I.E., I.C.S., *Gondi Grammar*, xvi, 241, 244, 321-2.
Truthfulness, 95-6, 144.
Tulagotal, *pargana*, 22, 33, 275, 276, 303.
Tulsidongri mountains, 24, 32, 36.
Tumirgunda, village of Tamo clan, 52, 199, 200, 305.
Turbans, 70, 74-5, 78.

Udam-garia (headman's dolmen seat of honour), xii, 96, 102, 106, 130, 141, 290.
'Uplift', 76, 78.
  See also Hinduisation.
Urad, a pulse (*phaseolus radiatus*), 134, 137, 148.
Urinating, 64, 155.
Urine, as bait for hares, 155.
Uriya language, Bhattri dialect of, 38.
Usendi clan, 140, 198, 201, 233-4, 236-8, 265-6, 269, 272, 289, 300, 306.
Usendi Moda of Orcha, xix, 233-4, 247, 265.
  pedigree, *facing p.* 306.
Utensils, 66, 124, 132, 170.

Vaccination, 16, 93.
Vegetables, 119, 135, 148, 152.
Vendettas, 94-5.
Venereal disease, 173.
Village, 66.
  HM, 101-10.
  BHM, 118-23.
  sold by one clan to another, 201.
Village mother, goddess and cult, 9, 39, 96, 104, 105, 106, 110, 118, 123, 130, 133, 135, 138-9, 140-1, 155, 161, 169, 195-7, 201, 205-6, 212, 219, 242, 265, 272.
Village shifting, 66-7, 103, 107-10, 119, 122-3, 291.
Village subscriptions. *See* Co-operation and *Sari-bori*.
Vine, wild, 170.
Virginity, lost before marriage, 247.
Vizagapatam Agency, Madras Presidency, 3, 17.
  See Jeypore.
Vizagapatam Gazetteer, 39.
Waddai (clan-priest), 57.
  as headman, 289.
  as magician, 226-8.
  as soothsayer, 229, 271-2, 283.
Walls, of houses, 114-15, 117.
Warangal, city and district Hyderabad State, 3, 4, 38, 39.
Warmth, 113, 118, 132, 164.
Washing, 65-7, 138, 270.
Watching crops, 129, 132-3.
Water-drawing, from river, 189 ; from wild vine, 170.
Waterfall-demon, xiii, 207.
Water-goddess, 166, 206.
Wattlework. *See* Fencing.
Wax, use in *cire perdue* process, 179-80.
Weaning, 219, 267, 270.
Weapons, 81-8, 132.
Weaving, 65, 97.
Wedding, 229, 249-50.
Wede (magician), 174.
Whetstones, 82, 83.
Whistling, '*sui*', 94.
Wicker-work, 101, 112, 117, 123.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

000

Widows, 144, 244, 245, 294 ; widow-marriage, 244, 245, 260-1, 294.
Wife-beating, 259, 262, 295.
Wills, Mr. C. U., I.C.S., 4, 33, 290.
Winnowing, 135, 136.
Winnows, 117, 136, 140.
Witchcraft, 168, 176, 198, 225-8.
Women, 62-3, 135-6, 151-2, 174, 189, 224.
  debarred from attendance at sacrifices, 197, 211, 213.
  cook first-fruits, 216.
  property and status, 294-5.
Wood, The Rt. Rev. Alex, Bishop of Nagpur, xvi, 194.

Xylophone, xiii.

Yams, 90, 97, 124, 152.
Yaws, 48, 93, 172-3.
Yete clan, 239, 303.

Zamindaris, 4, 10, 11, 15, 32, 143 286, 288, 299.
Zigzag stockading, 132.

SUPPLEMENT

000

TO THE REISSUE OF 1949

COMMENT
By Verrier Elwin

NOTE ON THE MARIA GONDS
OF CHANDA AND DRUG DISTRICT
By Sir Wilfrid Grigson

NOTES
By Verrier Elwin

ILLUSTRATIONS
By Verrier Elwin & Sir Wilfrid Grigson

[p. 351]
[p. 352 is blank]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

COMMENT

114 In a remarkable defence of scholarship and science, the late Baron von Hügel enumerated the intellectual virtues which find but a scanty development outside the life of the mind—' candour, moral courage, intellectual honesty, scrupulous accuracy, chivalrous fairness, endless docility to facts, disinterested collaboration, unconquerable hopefulness and perseverance, manly renunciation of popularity and easy honours, love of bracing labour and strengthening solitude '.[1] These qualities, which the anthropologist needs even more than the theologian, can be recognized in all the work to which Mr. W. V. Grigson has set his hand: in this book there is specially revealed his ' endless docility to facts ', in this preface his genius for disinterested collaboration. For it is not altogether a light thing to turn another investigator loose in one's own special pastures with full freedom to kick up his heels and do and say what he will.

I have perhaps two qualifications for entering those pastures: the first is that I have been over the ground—ten years later, it is true—but largely in Grigson's footsteps, as it was by his inspiration: the second is that I have read this book more frequently —I am willing to bet—than any other human being now living on this planet. I was once stranded on a three weeks' tour in Orissa with no other literary nourishment than Lord Wavell's *Other Men's Flowers*, and I estimate that I read (for I read quickly) that estimable anthology through no less than a dozen times. I must have read *The Maria Gonds of Bastar* even more often than that, for during several touring seasons it was never out of my hands, as I followed its guidance and used its great array of facts as a basis for further research. It is not an easy book, but it wears well. Three years' testing left me with a profound respect for its accuracy, admiration for the style and manner and a deep affection for the author who could write with such understanding of poor and ignorant folk. Naturally there are points where I disagree, where my judgement or information differs from Grigson's, even where I would, after much enquiry, go so far as to say that he was mistaken. He collected much of his material fifteen years ago, and wrote most of it not long afterwards; in those days he tended perhaps to give more credence to the reports of his subordinates, to accept more readily the denials of villagers, and to generalize more frequently than he would to-day.

---

[1] F. von Hügel, *The Mystical Element of Religion* (London, 1927), Vol. I, p. 79.

Yet these are but toys; the massive structure stands and will mark an epoch in the development of anthropological research in middle India. Burma and Assam, which have given us many good monographs are, for ethnographical purposes, largely separate from the rest of the sub-continent. *The Maria Gonds of Bastar*[1] is the first Indian book in the new manner which reaches modern standards of enquiry and documentation, which can compare with publications on America and the Pacific. It is not, of course, all due to Grigson, but it is an instructive exercise to examine the books on peninsular India published before 1938 and those that have appeared since.

No one has known and explored Bastar as Grigson has, and his real book is written on the face of the countryside he loved so completely. He started a tradition in Bastar and still to-day there is peace, freedom and happiness in hundreds of villages as a result of the principles he established. A whole legend has grown up round the name of 'Grikson Diwan', for if Grigson loved the Marias and Murias they certainly reciprocated his affection. It is rare for aboriginals to know, still less to remember, the names of administrators, yet I found in 1940 and the following years that Grigson's name was known in the remotest villages of the State, and old men who had no idea that there was a war believed that somewhere or other Grikson Diwan was caring for their interests. At the top of the beautiful Raughat the villagers will show you a great rock from which, they say, Mr. and Mrs. Grigson, enraptured by the loveliness of the scene, once leapt fully clad into the waters of the pool far below. The Murias of Koilibera were still chuckling ten years afterwards at their recollections of Grigson's chase of a man-eater, when the Marias of the south whom he brought with him ate every monkey in the hills and stripped all the trees of the forest of red ants—Grigson himself being by no means backward in sharing the fantastic diet. In one high lonely clearing

---

[1] So far as I know, Mr. Grigson has published the following since *The Maria Gonds of Bastar*: *Reports—Notes on the Aboriginal Problem in the Mandla District* (Nagpur, 1940); *The Aboriginal Problem in the Balaghat District* (Nagpur, 1941); *The Aboriginal Problem in the Central Provinces and Berar* (Nagpur, 1944). *Forewords*—to C. von Fürer-Haimendorf, *The Chenchus* (Bombay, 1943), to Verrier Elwin, *Maria Murder and Suicide* (Bombay, 1943), to C. von Fürer-Haimendorf, *Tribal Hyderabad* (Hyderabad, 1945). Translations of Muria Songs in *New Verse*, Feb.-March 1937. Review of Elwin, *The Baiga* in *Man*, Vol. XLI, p. 38. Letter on 'Cowrie Shells in the Central Provinces of India' in *Man*, Vol. XL, p. 159. Note on 'Human Sacrifice in Hyderabad' in *Man in India*, Vol. XXV, p. 68. *The Aboriginal in the Future India* (London, Royal Anthropological Institute, 1945); Presidential Address, Deccan History Association (Hyderabad, 1945).

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

of the Abujhmar, I was told, Grigson once encountered an ancient woman completely naked. She had never seen a white face before and, believing the visitor to be a Rakshasa, fell at his feet begging to be allowed to go for a few moments to her village to bid farewell to her little grandson, after which she would return to be devoured. 114

There is no end to these stories, many of them tales of generosity and kindness that would embarrass Grigson to have repeated. The result has been that Bastar is a very pleasant place to tour in. I have had trouble enough in Provinces and States, where there has been no one like Grigson to precede me, to realize vividly the difference that he has made. He is not the only one; Bastar has long been fortunate in her officers; but he set the pace.

When it was decided to issue an Indian edition of this book and Grigson asked me to write a sort of Comment to go with it, I was puzzled to know what to put in. I have done a certain amount of writing[1] about Bastar and the Bison-horn Marias, among whom I spent a good deal of time, and I did not want to repeat here what I had already written. In the end, at the risk of being very scrappy, I decided to give all my unpublished notes on the Marias, rather on the principle of the Abbot's order at the sack of Beziers: 'Kill them all; God will know his own.'

I deal first, therefore, with a few larger subjects, where my material supplements Grigson's, such as magic and the tragedies to which its practice leads, Bison-horn Maria ideas and taboos with regard to menstruation, pregnancy and birth, the dormitory and funerary customs. It seemed worth while to describe in some detail a marriage ceremony and the Ghotpal Marhai which I had witnessed personally. After that I proceed to give brief notes on points in the book which appear to need amplification. Short of reprinting a large amount of already published material, I do not know what other plan was possible.

II

Do the Marias believe in a Supreme Being? Grigson was not able to assemble any very definite evidence on this point. 'Only around Orcha', he says, 'and a few neighbouring Chhota 776

---

[1] For convenience of reference I shall give a list of my publications on Bastar and the Murias or Marias. 'Ceremonial Cross-Dressing among the Murias of Bastar State', *Man in India*, Vol. XXII, p. 163; 'Suicide among the Aboriginals of Bastar State', *Man in India*, Vol. XXII, p. 207; 'The Use of Cowries in Bastar State', *Man*, Vol. XLII, p. 121; 'The Sago Palm in Bastar State', *J.R.A.S. Bom.*, Vol. XVIII, p. 69; 'Folklore of the Bastar Clan-Gods', *Man*, Vol. XLIII, p. 97; *Maria Murder and Suicide* (Bombay, 1943); 'Stilt-Walking among the Murias of Bastar State', *Man*, Vol. XLIV, p. 38; *Folk-Tales of Mahakoshal* (Bombay, 1944); *The Muria and their Ghotul* (Bombay, 1947); 'Funerary Customs in Bastar State', *Man in India*, Vol. XXV. [113]

Dongar Pargana Hill Maria villages did I find any idea of a vague Supreme Being, Ispural, who would perhaps punish evil-doers somewhere after death; but no one could say who or where Ispural was, or where the sinful would be judged and punished. It is possibly a faint echo of missionary teaching passed on by bazaar gossip.' Koppers, who is perhaps a little too obviously anxious to discover belief in a Supreme Deity everywhere for the demands of strict science, protests at this vagueness. 'In the light of the many facts known to-day', he says, 'this effort at explanation is not satisfactory. Apart from other difficulties it seems more than improbable that aboriginals would in such a case quickly and easily find a new word to express a meaning which (according to Grigson's assumption) would be foreign to their mental vocabulary. The word Ispural appears to be genuinely Dravidian.'[1] But Grigson could hardly be expected to improve on his evidence, and actually nothing is more characteristic of the aboriginal ecstatics than their invention of new words. I too have heard vague references to Ispural—far away from Chhota Dongar in the east of Kondagaon as well as in the Jhoria foothills. In a Muria song, Ispural is described as having daughters, the youngest of whom is Phulsundri Rani. In a Burkal Pata, a song used when a man has been killed by a tiger, Ispural appears as one of many gods who is accused of having caused the tragedy. Among the Bondos of Jeypore (who do not speak a Dravidian language), I found Ispur as the name of a sky god who is invoked at the time of winnowing the grain if there is no wind to blow away the chaff. This, and the fact that he has daughters, suggests that Ispural is a variant of Indra or Indal, a sky god who sends the rain and whose daughters often visit the earth. The actual word 'Ispural' may have been born in trance. A wizard hears the names Ishwar, Indal, Purub (Lord); they sink into his mind and are forgotten; then one day as he is raving in trance a new word comes into his head, and a new god is made.

But although Ispural is only doubtfully a name of the Supreme Being, the evidence appears to me overwhelming that all the aboriginals of central India and Orissa believe in some sort of Creator or Supreme Deity. Some of them, identifying him with the Sun, call him by a special tribal name and very generally they use the honorific terms Bhagavan or Mahapurub[2] and their dialectical variants. The most convincing proof that this belief is not a modern Hindu or missionary accretion is to be found in a study of the myths of origin which in many tribes have all the marks of antiquity. In these a Supreme Being is firmly established. He is not omnipotent, he is not omniscient, his character is ambiguous, his morals are uncertain and his language coarse. But he is exalted far above all others and he is the prime mover in the creative process as well as the goal of the human spirit after death. 776

---

[1] W. Koppers, 'Bhagwan, the Supreme Deity of the Bhils', *Anthropos*, Tome XXXV and XXXVI, p. 307.

[2] Bhagavan is the classical Hindu term for the adorable object of *Bhakti* worship; Mahapurub or Mahaprabhu is a Sanskrit word meaning 'great master' and may be applied to any eminent person, human or divine; in Bengal it is specially used of Chaitanya.

My collection of Maria myths is incomplete, but the Bison-horn Maria story of Creation leaves no room to doubt the tribe's belief in a Supreme Deity. 776 773

> There was a great rain and the world was drowned. But Gajabhimul put a brother and sister—their names were Kawachi and Kuharami—in a gourd. This gourd drifted to and fro until it ran aground on a great rock. Mahapurub sent a crow to search for men. The crow found the gourd, pecked it open and released the boy and girl who began to cry. Mahapurub told the crow to stop the noise, but it wanted the children to die so that it could feed on their bodies and it did nothing. Mahapurub sent an eagle, but it too did nothing. Then he sent a tiger, but it too did nothing. At last he sent a monkey. The monkey sat on a rock and asked the children what was the matter. The rock was so hot that it burnt its buttocks and it jumped on to a tree. 'We have nowhere to go,' said the children, 'and there is no food.' The monkey returned to Mahapurub and told him. 539
>
> Mahapurub now sent a boar. 'Near the rock is a tortoise,' he said. 'It has made itself a home of mud and clay. Take off the mud and spread it on the rock.' 'But how am I to live without food?' asked the boar. 'These children will sow seed,' said Mahapurub. 'There will be a harvest on the rock, and you will be the first to eat it.' That is why the wild boar always ravages the crops before men can reap them.
>
> The boar found the tortoise and rolled itself in the mud. It came to the rock and shook itself violently. The mud flew in all directions and there was the world again.

This story was recorded at Rewali and was repeated with small variants in other villages. But at Killepal, the Marias said that the children were put in the gourd by the gods Andalkosa, Patraj, Pirusi and Tuldokarj. It was Mahapurub who wanted to destroy the children and he himself tried to cut the gourd open and so let them drown. But the gods got hold of the gourd in time and threw it into the water and it drifted away out of Mahapurub's reach. If this is a Supreme Being, it is a singularly imperfect one. And 776 773

776 indeed it must be confessed that the Maria belief in Mahapurub is weaker than in other tribes. The Sun and Moon were created, not by him, but by human beings. 773 Fire was not given—as in so many legends—to the world by God, but was discovered by man in a more or less natural way in a broken stone or a split bamboo. In only one of the folk-tales does Mahapurub play a part. In this he teaches the hero how to make a hearth and gives him a magic bel stick. He refuses to answer the prayer of a bird which begs him to restore its mate to life.

776 On the whole, we may conclude that while the Marias undoubtedly believe in some kind of Supreme Deity, he is not vividly imagined by them, and his cult is overlaid by the interest and excitement aroused by the earth-bound deities like Danteshwari and the clan-gods and by the attention that must be given to the Departed.

III

000 The general pattern of Maria magical beliefs has been traced by Grigson and his picture may be supplemented by my chapter on 'Witchcraft and Magic' in *Maria Murder and Suicide*. A few additional notes may be of interest.

754 The dread of witchcraft and black magic seems to me to be stronger among the Marias than in the other primitive populations of Middle India. Among the neighbouring Bondos, for example, it is comparatively weak and hardly troubles the deeply religious Saoras whose attention is concentrated on pacifying the Dead.

In Maria opinion, the practitioner of black magic is frequently a widow, often a riggish widow. Her chief delight is to interfere with other people's pleasures; she sends grubs into the spathe of the sago palm and thus checks the supply of the refreshing juice; she loves to rob a fresh young girl of her rightful joys by prolonging her menstrual periods; she frustrates men's happiness by making them impotent; she blights the marriage-bed with barrenness. These wanton and jealous widows are a great nuisance in Maria society. Oyami Anda of Bara Harmamunda told me how he was pestered by one of them but, since he had two wives already, did not want to be involved in a scandal and in any case was not attracted, he rejected her advances. In revenge she nearly killed him with black magic. Another old Oyami Maria insisted that it was only a widow who could perform this magic; as a young man such a woman had begged him to lie with her and when he refused had made him impotent. At Kuchepal I met a man who had once engaged himself in that most dangerous of erotic adventures, a love-affair with a widow. After a time he wearied of her and in

revenge she ' destroyed his seed '. For several years he was unable 154
to get a child, though in the end the Perma diagnosed the trouble and after the proper sacrifices his wife conceived.

A number of recent murders were due either to the desire of 674
a victim to be revenged on a witch or wizard or to a man's resentment at being accused of sorcery. The Orcha murder of 1941 was 754
due to a Hill Maria called Mukka suspecting that the Gaita, Pidche, 578
was practising sorcery against him. After killing him he put the corpse in a stream, but next day recovered and buried it, the whole village agreeing to hush the matter up. The following year Podiyami Doma of Michnar killed Kuharami Konda during a New Eating Festival because the latter accused him of being a thief and a sorcerer. On November 26th, 1941 Gumma Karwe, a young Bison-horn Maria, killed his uncle Gumma Galla at Toinar. Only three months previously Karwe had been married. One day his young wife went with his father and step-mother to visit relations at Gummalnar, a journey that took them over the Indrawati. It was October and I well remember the heavy floods that year. The water swept away the canoe in which they were crossing the river and the bodies were never recovered. A month later, while uncle and nephew were drinking palm wine together they began to quarrel. The younger man accused his uncle of causing the death of his wife, on whom he had spent twenty rupees in cash and three measures of paddy, by magic. Galla admitted it, even boasted of it, and threatened to kill him in the same way. The boy, wild with rage and fear, killed Galla forthwith by a heavy blow from his axe.

At the beginning of March 1944, one evening as the crescent moon was rising above the eastern horizon, there was a violent quarrel in Barse Bendo's house at Kadampal, and a few hours later one of the disputants crept out of his house and stabbed his enemy to death with an arrow as he lay asleep. Barse Bendo was a well-known and successful magician with a large practice. In the same village a youngish man called Kunjami Gota set up as a Siraha and seems to have succeeded in drawing away some of Bendo's patients and creating a sense of rivalry and opposition. Gota's own uncle, Kunjami Tonda, however, preferred the treatment of the older and more experienced man, and when his wife Mate fell ill at the beginning of 1944 he took her to Bendo, and not to his nephew, for consultation. She soon recovered, but shortly afterwards Tonda's two little sons, Lakhma and Bala, fell ill and he came with his whole family to stay in a leaf-hut built for patients in Bendo's compound. Bala was cured in a day or two, but Lakhma, who had a swollen face, did not improve. Here was Bendo's chance. At the time of divination he skilfully introduced the name of Gota

754 578 674 into his ravings and afterwards declared that it had been revealed to him that the child's illness had been caused by the evil influence of his rival whom he now denounced as a Pangnaha or sorcerer. Gota was summoned to the house and when he came Tonda—prompted by Bendo—asked him to perform antidotal magic to undo the harm he had done and so cure the little boy. This was a clever move. If Gota agreed he became a self-confessed Pangnaha; if he refused to treat a patient, Bendo would see to it that his reputation as a Siraha was destroyed. Gota chose the safer course, and declared that he knew nothing about the treatment of the sick. They all protested at this, reminding him how they had seen him curing disease by *mana-bujha* and sprinkling rice on the heads of ailing children. Tonda said, 'Bendo has cured Bala, but he can't do anything for Lakhma. You are a new man and have cured other people's children. Now cure your own cousin.' But Gota still refused. This made Tonda furious, for the refusal confirmed his suspicion, so carefully fostered by the jealous and wily Bendo, that Gota himself was responsible for the trouble, and that in fact he was an impostor, not a Siraha at all, but a mere Pangnaha. He lost control of himself and began to shout insults and accusations at his nephew, saying that he was trying to kill his own cousins and was of such unbearable wickedness that even when he was found out he would do nothing to remedy matters. In the quarrel the two men came to blows, but they were separated and Gota was taken back to his house. The others went to sleep and Tonda lay down outside the little hut where his wife watched by the sick child. But Gota, angry and brooding over the accusation which he knew well would spoil his practice as a Siraha and thus ruin him economically as well as socially, waited for some hours and then crept into Bendo's compound and stabbed Tonda to death with an arrow. Gota was brought to trial and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment, escaping the gallows partly in consequence of a passage (on p. xxvi) in *Maria Murder and Suicide* which was quoted in the judgement.

To understand the Japgunda murder of 1943 a certain amount of family history must be related. Masa, a Hill Maria of Japgunda, had two brothers Gai and Bija. When Gai died, leaving a widow and a daughter Muri, his younger brother inherited the widow along with the property and adopted a boy named Erka as a Lamana'i to work for his step-daughter. When the period of service was complete, Erka and Muri were married and both continued to live in Bija's house until in due time Erka succeeded, on Bija's death, to control of the household and became guardian of Bija's three little sons, Suku, Gilu and Aga.

Masa, the children's uncle and sole survivor of the elder branch 754
of the family, was the Waddai of the clan-god of Japgunda. He
seems to have resented the way a poor Lamana'i boy like Erka had 578
risen in the world and become owner of both his brothers' property,
and there was some tension in the relations between the two houses. 674
For five or six years, Erka had had good crops and Masa bad ones, and Masa decided that his failure must be due to the fact that Erka was practising magic against him. One day he openly accused the younger man of sorcery and challenged him to an ordeal. Erka, who had no desire to quarrel, accepted and a pot of boiling water and cowdung was prepared. Erka dipped his fingers into it and was badly burned.

This incident convinced the villagers that Erka was a sorcerer [554]
and had a curious effect on his own character. He found that, far from being a social outcaste, he—the poor Lamana'i boy—was believed to have the ear of the goddess Parkal Muttai and that many people were coming to him for advice and help. He grew proud and arrogant and when he caused the death of a calf, a pig and a fowl belonging to Masa, no one dared to remonstrate with him. Bija's little boys were growing up and Erka built a house of his own near by. Presently Aga was to be married and some time late in August 1943 the wedding was held in Bija's old house. Masa was, of course, invited but on his way to join the festivities—for the essence of a Hill Maria marriage is a dance, a drink and a heavy meal—Erka went out to intercept him. He greeted him pleasantly and showing him a gourd of rice-beer took him aside to drink with him on the bank of the village pond. Some time later boys coming in their finery for the marriage dance saw the two men sitting together by the water under a virgin moon. The next day Masa's mutilated body was found in the pond.

Erka immediately used his reputation as a sorcerer to hush the matter up. He called the elders to his house, bribed the Kotwar whose duty it was to report suspicious deaths to the police, and taking the headman and another person of some influence aside, sat them down and drew on the ground what was described at the trial as a 'magic line'. He put dub grass, a knife and a bit of cowdung on it and two rupees on one side and three rupees on the other. Then he asked the two men to pick up the money, saying that this act bound them to secrecy. Deeply impressed, the headman went out and told the other villagers that they must cremate the body at once and make no report to the authorities. On the way to the pyre the usual divination by *sāja* leaves was performed and indicated that Masa had died by violence. It was five months before rumours of the crime reached the police.

674 754 823 I do not in any way emphasize it, but it seems to me curious that many crimes connected with sorcery are associated with water; they are performed on the banks of ponds or rivers and in several instances the body has been thrown into the water afterwards. Does a murderer who has killed a sorcerer believe that there is some spiritual antiseptic for him in throwing his victim's body into water?

IV

841 Grigson has studied in detail the custom of the Hill Marias in regard to menstruation, pregnancy and birth, but his notes on the Bison-horn Marias need, as he says, 'considerable supplementing'. The Bison-horn Marias have the curious belief that men, not women, were originally subject to a menstrual period. They used to tie hollow bamboos to their organs to catch the discharge. Once—according to one legend—a girl was laughing at a man in this distressing and inconvenient condition, and he lost his temper and threw the bamboo at her; in another story a sister wanted to help her brother, who could not cut his clearing properly on account of the bamboo tagged on in front of him, and offered to take it instead. 841 826 Yet other legends ascribe the origin of menstruation to a wound. There were formerly teeth in the vagina and when these were removed, the wound was not wholly healed. Once the vagina was in the crick of the leg behind the knee—you can still see its shape—but a hen pecked at it and the frightened organ jumped for safety to its hiding-place between the thighs. But it was hurt and it still bleeds every month at the recollection.

841 All the Gond tribes are very strict about the menstrual taboos, in this contrasting sharply with the Orissa Bondos, Gadabas, and Saoras, who are at a similar stage of culture and live not very far away. Grigson has described the extreme rigorism of the Hill Marias and has rightly suggested that the Bison-horn Marias are somewhat less apprehensive of the dangers of menstruation. But they too, like the Murias and the Gonds generally, are strict enough in their application of the taboo and breach of it may be punished by the Departed through the bite of a snake or the destruction of the harvest. They do not usually build special menstruation huts, but sometimes where there is a girls' dormitory, menstruating women sleep on one side of the hut and unmarried girls on the other. In such villages, no married woman may go near the dormitory nor should youths enter it. Not all dormitories however are used in this way.

841 881 Elsewhere part of the veranda of the ordinary living-house is screened off or a little hut is built in the compound for the use of

a woman at this time. At the menarche (for which the word used 841
is *kumor utta*, 'the blossoming of the flower'), however, a special 881
hut is built for the girl by women outside the village. A woman
of the household brings her food and sleeps with her at night;
she must bathe whenever she returns to the house. In some
villages, the Marias still make a platform up a tree for the girl, who
during the day must hide herself in the forest.

It is very dangerous for anyone to see, let alone to touch, a 881
girl at her menarche. At Tikanpal I was told that if a man saw
such a girl as he went through the jungle he should slap her and then 783
go to her parents and after rebuking them, demand a fowl which he
should sacrifice; then he should bathe and anoint himself with oil. 841
At Gadapal they said that a man should throw a lump of earth
between his legs at the girl, or a stick over his shoulder, and then
go home and bathe. Neglect of these precautions might lead
to blindness.

At the end of the period—all this refers only to the first period— 881
the girl destroys her hut or platform during the night, throws 841
away her cloth,[1] bathes and returns home before cockcrow. In
some villages she is expected to remain for a day or two longer on 783
the veranda of her house: if she has a married elder brother, it is [607]
the special duty of his wife to attend to her. Then she puts oil and
turmeric on her body—an act which is said to symbolize her formal
re-admission into caste, for during the previous days she has been
regarded as excommunicated. In many Maria villages, however,
the ceremonial use of turmeric is still unknown, and the elder
brother's wife carries a pot of water round the house and sprinkles
everyone saying, 'Now you are back again in caste'. After this
the girl fetches water in an earthen pot and cowdungs the floor.
In the evening her father invites some of the elders to a bottle
of liquor and says, 'My daughter who was unclean all these days is
now clean again'. He sacrifices a fowl to the Departed and they [769]
feast on its flesh.

There is not nearly so much fuss about the later periods. The 841
woman has to keep out of the way, but there is no danger in looking
at her, and when it is over she just has a bath and resumes her
ordinary duties. But even so her daily programme is considerably
disturbed. She must not sleep inside the house and, of course,
sexual intercourse is strictly forbidden. She must not cook or fetch
water or go to work in the fields. She must not touch cattle, pigs

---

[1] There do not seem to be any special taboos associated with this cloth. [754
But the leaf-cups from which the girl eats at this time are charged with
magical potency and if a witch can get hold of them she can afflict the girl 789]
with palsy.

or fowls. She must not take grain from the bins or approach the
841 Hearth of the Departed. Except at the menarche, however, she may fetch wood and leaves which may be used by other members of the household; she may fish so long as it is not in a pond; she may even dance so long as it is not at a Penkarsita and she does not touch any man.

When I was taking photographs in Maria villages I frequently came up against these taboos. At Mokhpal I was unable to photograph a girl with strikingly Mongolian features because she was in her period—the people seemed genuinely afraid that the menstrual exhalations would break the lens. At Tikanpal, where I wanted to stage a group of girls making leaf-cups, I was not permitted to do so because one of them was in her period and must not sit on a mat. At Doriras a married girl refused to be photographed standing in front of the girls' dormitory because menstruating women were accustomed to sleep there.

During a wife's period a husband is subject to the laws of a 'little couvade'. No one will eat from his hands; no one will accept tobacco from his pouch. He must not cook or fetch water. He too must not go to the grain bins or approach the symbols of the Departed. He may go to a shrine, but he must not enter it; he may cut his clearing, but he must not fire it or sow seed. He may not hunt, carry a *kawar*-pole, climb a tree, cut grass or reap a crop. If he is a Perma or Gaita he may not perform any religious rite, and if he is a Gunia he cannot divine the cause of sickness.

It is generally believed by the Marias, as by the rest of India,
842 that a woman is most likely to conceive if she has intercourse on the day she has her ceremonial bath at the close of the period.

As by other aboriginals the climacteric is accepted by the
886 Marias as a matter of course. 'As it appears, so it disappears.' If an elderly woman or her husband dreams of a dried-up tank or stream, it means that this crisis is approaching.

V

Pregnancy is diagnosed by the cessation of the menses, vomiting,
843 swelling of the breasts and a darkening of the nipples. 'The face dries a little.' It is generally supposed that a boy is more exacting and makes the mother look fragile and exhausted, while a girl keeps her fresh and well.

During pregnancy, Bison-horn Maria taboos are not exacting
843 and my suspicion is that originally they were as few and as casual
177 as those of the Hill Maria, and that any elaboration is due to the influence of the local Hindus who, on the whole, pay more attention to the pregnancy than to the menstrual taboos. In other words,

Hinduization weakens the taboo on the menstruating and 843
strengthens that on the pregnant woman. It was at Gudra, which
stands on a motor-road, that I heard most about restrictions during 177
pregnancy. The pregnant woman in that village was not allowed
to cross a stream or the rope with which a horse was tethered ; she
could not pick or reap any growing thing ; if she plastered a wall,
she must leave a small hole somewhere. She must not eat the head or
legs of a sacrificed animal.[1] Eclipses are dangerous ; if a woman [821]
goes out of doors at such a time there is danger that her child may
be born with a hare-lip or a squint. It is sometimes held that a
pregnant woman should not go to the forest clearings ; at Barem
the daughter of Barse Chule did so ; she met a Rau in a whirlwind
and was prematurely delivered of a stillborn child.

The cravings of pregnancy are believed, as elsewhere in India, 843
to be due to the erratic and uncertain desires of the child in the
womb, but whereas there is usually a belief that it is essential
to gratify these cravings I found some Bison-horn Marias of opinion
that to do so was dangerous. 'If she eats earth, she will die ;
if she craves for fish and gets it, she will die.' But at Gudra they
took the conventional view and held it was more dangerous to deny
the cravings than to fulfil them. Long ago, I was told, a woman
wanted a plantain and could not get it ; the child was born with a
plantain in its hand. Another woman demanded buttermilk and
when her request was denied, her hands and feet swelled.

Birth normally occurs on the fenced-in veranda of a Bison- 844
horn Maria house, in the place where the menstruating woman has
to sleep. Any variation from the normal is considered dangerous ; [845]
a foot-presentation, for example, is expected to prove fatal to both
child and mother. For the cord to be discovered round the shoulder [787]
is a good omen and prophesies wealth ; but a strangulating cord
suggests that the child will be hanged and a cord round the leg
is also bad. The cord is cut with an arrow-head if the child is
a boy, with a knife or sickle if it is a girl. The mother herself
or some old woman of the household makes a ligature and severs the
cord below it. Meanwhile the husband erects in the compound a
small 'bathing-hut', a simple unroofed structure of leafy branches, [343]
inside which he digs a pit. Then the mother herself, or her attendant,
puts the placenta and cord on a leaf-platter of *bauhinia vahlii*
leaves[2] and places it in the pit. The father fills the pit with earth
and places three green logs and sometimes a large stone or wooden

---

[1] I have been told that no woman should at any time eat part of an animal sacrificed to Bhimul or Dongar Pen.

[2] This platter, which is chosen at random from a pile, is carefully examined, for the number of children the mother may expect is estimated from the number of bamboo stitches holding it together.

844 seat above it. Near by he drives the arrow or knife into the ground. He brings a pot of water and puts it inside the hut; should the water [787] decrease of its own accord it is regarded as a very bad omen and the child is expected to die. This hut is now used constantly by the mother who comes five or six times a day to bathe herself and the baby. She always takes water from the pot kept inside the enclosure and it is refilled each time with warm water heated elsewhere. The mother regularly pours warm water over the child's umbilical stump, for so long as it does not drop off she is in a state of taboo and can do no work.

In some villages the placenta is buried under a *bassia latifolia* tree and a large stone is placed above, 'for this tree does every kind of work for us'. Very small babies are sometimes buried in the same place so that they can suck the milky sap.

When the stump falls off, it is buried in the placenta-pit; should it be dug up and eaten, for example, by a dog, the child would cease suckling and die. After a year has passed the Perma comes to offer compensation of a fowl and rice-beer to the Earth Mother because they have offended her by burying the placenta and cord in the ground.

846 Once the stump has dropped the mother is free of the restrictions on her and when she feels ready—'when her body is dry and 852 clean'—she has a final bath, cowdungs the house and begins to cook and live normally again. The father shaves the child's head. The mother herself destroys the little bathing-hut. The father smears the arrow with oil and puts it in the roof of the house. When a boy grows up it is shown to him and he can use it for hunting, though no special virtue seems to attach to it.

On the day of the mother's ceremonial entry into the house, 852 there is a little feast, cooked by the woman herself, on the veranda. 853 The Perma and a few neighbours are invited and they have a pot of rice-beer. Before they drink, each of the visitors dips his finger into it and gives it to the child to suck. The mother presents oil and a ring to each of the women who helped her and to the Waddai and Perma. The child is often, though not always, named on this occasion. A chicken is dedicated by being fed on rice and is set free. A year later it is sacrificed and a bit of the liver is given to the child. If a baby cries continually it is supposed that it has been given the wrong name and the Waddai renames it and dedicates another chicken. In Gadapal I was told that if the gods disapprove a child's name, they send Hidmaraj to make it itch and Markaraj to make it cry.

845 The Marias do not seem to have made up their minds about twins. One village thinks them lucky, another disastrous. There

is a vague idea that monozygotic twins are more likely to be fortunate than dizygotic. Thus when Tati Buta's wife gave birth to female twins at Palnar, it was observed that they had but one placenta and the people declared them to be lucky and expected them to survive—which they did. But at Phulpar, where Sodi Mandra's wife gave birth to dizygotic twins, a boy and a girl, both died within a fortnight, and at Bara Harmamunda, where Oyami Kama's wife had male twins of the same order, both parents and the children died soon afterwards. 845

The Marias believe that the cause of such births may be physical, magical or supernatural. When Gangu of Koriras had male twins it was believed to have been due to her eating off a leaf-plate made of double leaves. It was the indiscretion of eating a double cob of maize that gave Oyami Kama's wife her twins. The Marias, therefore, are generally careful not to pick double leaves or fruit—double plantains, ebony fruit, maize and so on. Even a husband should be careful about this. For even though twins are not specially unlucky nobody wants them, and it is hard for the mother to nourish two children properly. If a young girl has twins, it is generally assumed that she has been lying with more than one man. At Gogonda a woman had intercourse both with her husband and a lover on the day of her post-menstrual bath. The result was twins and such grievous offence to the Departed that they killed both children within a few weeks.

The Marias also believe that twins may be the result of intercourse with a supernatural being. At Gudra I was told how Hunga Nupo's wife was visited by a Ran: 'He laughed and went to her. The next day her husband lay with her and in due time she gave birth to twins.' A similar story is told of the wife of Sodi Mandra.

Maria twins, like twins all over India, are named after the inseparable couple Rama and Lakshman. Two boys are Rama and Lakha, two girls Rame and Lakhe. The after-birth, whether double or single, of both children is buried in one pit and only one arrow is put above it. In the same way the twins are supposed to remain very close to each other throughout their lives. 845 553

VI

Grigson was unable to find any trace of the dormitory among the Bison-horn Marias; the people always denied that they existed, and even said that they were a degraded institution. Grigson was rightly suspicious of these denials, for in fact a simple form of dormitory exists in most of the bigger Bison-horn Maria villages. Even to-day the headmen deny their existence—I have never 883

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

883 quite understood why—but once they realize that the enquirer is not prepared to be deceived they talk fairly freely about them.

883
485
In all these villages there are commodious rest-houses for the use of visitors and officials on tour and when they are unoccupied—and they are but seldom used officially—the boys sleep in them as their dormitories. The boys, however, are not fully organized as among the Murias, but a leader may be appointed—in Mokhpal he was called the Sian, in Chote Timnar the Peda. Sometimes an older man sleeps with them and imposes a rough sort of discipline, fining those who are absent without cause. An old Maria, Sodi Mukha, is said to have been very proud of his management of the dormitory at Mokhpal. 'Originally', I was told in this village, 'the boys used to make their house in the middle of the place and it was theirs. But when Government ordered us to make a rest-house we had to build it not as we wanted it, but as the officers wanted it.'

883
841
The girls sometimes sleep together in the house of a lonely widow, but often have their own building. This is occasionally combined with the corporate menstruation hut. The menstruating women sleep on one side and the unmarried girls on the other. It is more common, however, for such women to sleep at home and to leave the unmarried girls to themselves. They too are not organized as in the Muria ghotul, but they are fined for quarrelling and for non-attendance. Both boys and girls have regular duties. They must all bring wood for the dormitory fire. At marriages and funerals they must collect wood and make leaf-plates. In the evening the boys and girls often meet in some central place or in front of the boys' house and dance and play games.

883
836
The relations between the boys and girls are not organized and disciplined as among the Murias. At marriages the members of the two dormitories may slip away together and sleep in some secluded place. At Penta the boys described how a girl would make a hole in the wall near which she slept. 'Then a boy creeps up and pokes a stick through the hole to wake her, and she creeps out to join him.' At Bara Harmamunda, the boys said that they actually went into the girls' house, though I fancy this is exceptional.

883 The Bison-horn Maria dormitory does not seem to play an important part in the social or religious life of the tribe. It is not established in the mythology; it does not serve as a school of dancing or as a place for initiation into sexual experience; there is no need in these pacific hills for village guard-rooms. Whether at any time the institution existed in a more flourishing form it is now impossible to say.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

VII

I found it very difficult—and I suspect that Grigson had 796
the same experience—to see Marias in action. Tribes vary greatly
in their willingness to allow a visitor to be present at their ceremonial. 609
The Murias used to invite me to marriages or festivals, sending
information about them long beforehand. The Saoras are delighted
to have visitors at their celebrations and more than once the ghost
of a long dead headman has come upon the priest and admonished
the people to treat me right. But the Bondos do their utmost to
keep the stranger away; during the great summer festival they pile
the paths leading to their villages with thorn bushes and not even
a fellow Bondo, if he belongs to another village, is admitted. The
Marias do not go so far as that, yet I found them singularly unwilling
to let me watch them do anything. When I was camping at Borgum
I heard that the Wijja Pandum was to be celebrated in two days'
time and rather unwisely announced my intention of being present.
On the morning of the festival a delegation arrived in camp to say
that the proceedings had had to be postponed because the Perma's
wife was in her period—though I darkly suspect that the old lady
had in fact passed the climacteric. I had to dodge round the country
for weeks before I saw a wedding, and to witness the Ghotpal
Marhai I had to come sixty miles on an elephant down from the
Abujhmar because the dates were changed at the last moment.

But since a page of personal observation is worth a whole 585
chapter of hearsay I will describe the wedding at which I assisted
and the great festival at Ghotpal in 1942.

On March 15th, 1942 I was camping in Gogonda at the edge
of the hills overlooking the great southern plain. That evening,
I was told, two girls were to be taken to Sirsitti, a village some two
thousand feet below, to be married. At about five o'clock therefore
married and unmarried women collected and began to dance
with one of the brides. She had her head and shoulders completely
covered with a shawl and wailed loudly all the time. Three pots 585
of rice-beer were distributed to the dancers and a large number of 535
onlookers, and then the dancers took the bride round the village.
This was a very pretty sight. The circle of dancers would suddenly
elongate into a line and then curl up again in a ring. As they danced
from house to house, men and women would come out and put a [431]
ring on the bride's finger or a necklace round her neck and embrace
her by raising her hands twice to their foreheads and then clasping
her in their arms. As they did so, the dancers sang the names of the 585
people who were giving presents and their exact relationship to the 533
bride. At other times they sang how the girl had hitherto been
going to and fro freely in the jungle, getting wood, husking grain,

585 fetching water, but that now she was to go to a life that was both
[533] sweet and bitter. Finally, a group of quite little girls arrived on
the scene with bundles of food tied up in cloth on their heads and
the bride, still weeping loudly, was carried off by her girl companions
across the fields into the sunset. It was a moving sight, this taking
away of the bride to her new life, but it was noticeable that no
member of the bridegroom's family came to fetch her. She was
simply taken away by her own people to his village.

Next morning I started before dawn with my assistant Mr. Sampat Singh on the long descent to Sirsitti. The scenery on the way was magnificent. From the brow of the hill we could see stretching away almost to Orissa the great plain of Konta and Sukma with the peaks of hills rising above the mist just touched by the morning sun. When we reached the village we found the two marriages in progress, though everyone was a little jaded having been up dancing all night. There were little camps outside the village for the two brides and the bridegrooms' families sent food and liquor out to them. During the morning there was some desultory dancing in the middle of the village, and a group of girls sat round each bride who wailed loudly from time to time as the girls sang to her about the sorrows and hardships of the married life to which she was now going. Young men from Gogonda, the brides' village, cooked the food supplied by the bridegrooms and this was ready about three o'clock in the afternoon. The visitors assembled beneath a magnificent mango tree outside the village, and the feast
was very carefully served by the young men ; an exact number of
[264] leaf-cups was prepared and each contained the same number of
bits of pork ; an equal number contained identical portions of rice.
The boys then served the cups, first to the women and then to the
men. Others went round pouring gravy on the rice and they all
ate together. When the meal was over they went to a stream near
[271] by and drank, kneeling down and putting their faces right into
the water to suck it up.

Then the girls assembled round the first bride, who was still
585 covered with the shawl which all through that sweltering day she
had not once laid aside, and danced with her into the centre of the
535 village. Another party escorted the second bride and soon the
scene was very lively with two separate dances whirling round
the square. Presently the first party danced up to the future
husband's house. They gathered in a very tight block before
the door and began to sing loudly and rapidly, jerking their bodies
to and fro from the hips, a song which meant, 'Come and get her
if you can, brother ; come and catch her if you can'. For some
585 time the bridegroom stood in a rather embarrassed fashion in the

doorway while his parents encouraged him and the old women 585 shouted ribald jokes. At last he plucked up courage and made a dash for the girl. Her companions resisted him but at last, of course, he broke through them, seized the girl and dragged her weeping loudly into the house. The girls rushed after them and pushed and hustled them into an inner room and shut the door on them, the theory being that they would consummate the marriage there and then. The old women stood round the hut trying to look inside and discussing the bridegroom's potency. The cock which is often stolen by the bride's party from the bridegroom's house was here given as a present with a little cloth to the bride's younger sister.

This was the end of one marriage. The other was a surprise. 585 The girls came dancing with the shrouded bride up to the house, the bridegroom put on a new shirt for the occasion, his mother 535 brought water to wash the feet of her new daughter-in-law. Everything was ready, but after the girls had danced round once or twice in front of the house, they made as if to go right round it in honour of the Departed. Everybody waited for them to complete the circuit and return, but their voices grew fainter and fainter, and I went out to see them dancing away into the forest. It was then explained to the unfortunate bridegroom that certain ceremonies [789] had to be performed in Gogonda to protect the bride against magical dangers with which she was threatened and that she would be returned to him in three days' time.

It was then six o'clock and we returned to camp.

VIII

On February 2nd, 1942 there was celebrated at Ghotpal near Barsur the great Marhai and Pen-Karsita of the Lekhami clan. 796 Directly I arrived and made my camp under some trees I was 609 greeted by a little deputation of local priests who told me very politely but quite firmly that though they were delighted to have me there I would not be permitted to take any photographs or write anything down. Later I went with Mr. Sampat Singh to the shrine of the Ghotpal clan-god, the Anga, Usendi Pen, with whom are his sons Hunga and Wella and his daughter Wange. I was at once surrounded by people telling me that I must not go inside. An elderly magician approached me and in a stern voice told me to take my hat off, for I was looking at a god. Such instructions are unusual in aboriginal India.

Nothing happened that day, but people began to assemble 796 and many merchants arrived and set up their booths in a line along the edge of the great open dancing-ground in front of the shrine.

796 Next morning large parties of Marias and Murias came from every direction, some of the Murias from the Mardapal Pargana and the villages round Chhota Dongar. A little rain fell and there was a lot of blowing of horns. At midday the Anga and other symbols of the gods were taken down to a stream for a bathe and during the afternoon many Sirahas fell into trance and postured and danced in ecstasy. A little shrine was set up in the middle of the clearing and as more and more people arrived and other gods came to visit Usendi Pen, the Sirahas danced wildly round and round it. A procession was formed, the Anga leading it, with tall poles decorated with peacocks' feathers following, and a crowd of children carrying [534] gongs and various substitutes for gongs—bits of painted wood, the lids of old kerosene oil tins, anything that could be banged to make a noise.

Gradually the place filled up and by four o'clock there were three or four thousand people present—a small attendance, I was told. The Marias and Murias showed little interest in the shops which were mostly attended by local Hindus and officials, and there was very little drinking, though many a boy brought a gourd or a bottle of rice-beer or palm wine hanging under his arm. Then the dancing began, and hundreds of boys and girls in the full Hill Maria dancing attire (though no Hill Marias were present) and carrying decorated sticks and axes over their shoulders, formed lines and processions and great circles, until the entire ground was alive with slowly circulating movement.

As evening fell little fires sprang up under every tree where groups of people made their camps. The older people drank, cooked and gossiped with their relatives. Like all bazaars the Marhai is a great occasion for repairing friendships. During the night the boys and girls continued dancing, and from time to time the Sirahas brought out the Anga gods and danced with them.

The moon rose at midnight and turned the scene into one of extraordinary majesty and beauty. The festival was decorous and restrained, but very happy. There was no orgy and practically no drunkenness. At dawn the dancing stopped and in a few minutes the whole great assembly melted away back into the forest.

IX

On page 281 Grigson refers briefly to the Bison-horn Maria 164 custom of erecting carved wooden pillars in memory of well-known or wealthy tribal leaders. There are not many of these pillars, though the custom of making them is far from moribund, but the expense is great and only the most important people are considered worthy of them.

These pillars are usually erected near a highway—not necessarily a motorable one. 764 They are usually made of the wood of *terminalia tomentosa* or *shorea robusta* and are erected with [824] ceremonies similar to those used for a menhir.

As far as I know, the pillars are always made by non-aboriginals, but since the Marias give their instructions to the carpenters about 764 the patterns they want carved, they do thus throw some light on 537 Maria psychology even if they do not illustrate their sense of art. For example, the pillar in memory of Kopa Dhurwa at Massenar was made by Bharto, an Oriya carpenter of Jagdalpur. The pillars for Barse Marka at Barrem and for Marvi Masa at Jabeli were both made by Anda Kalar of Potali. For Barse Marka's [435] pillar his sister's son gave a bull calf worth twenty rupees, cloth worth five rupees, two rupees in cash and daily rations for the fifteen days while the carpenter was working.

There was a fine pillar to a wealthy Maria named Muchaki Hunga near Dilmilli on the main road from Jagdalpur to Dantewara. It is a fat, thick pillar, carefully squared, standing some fifteen feet high with elaborate carvings round the base and a decoration of crocodiles and pigeons at the top. The whole is surmounted by a trident, obviously suggested by the carpenter, and on this again is a small bird. On the west face of the pillar there are carvings of dancers wearing bison horns and six girls who are realistically portrayed with breasts and genitalia. Below them is a tiger, a crane and a peacock. On the south side is a picture of the dead man riding an elephant, an umbrella in his hand and bags of money at the saddle. Five women follow him with pots of rice-beer and spoons. Below them are rats. At the foot are men ploughing, deer and tigers. On the east side is a man riding a horse and fish, horses and a tortoise. To the north is a man and wife with their children, a gourd for taking beer from a pot and representations of snakes and birds. Below this are two pairs of dogs apparently copulating, and at the very bottom some men are carrying a pot of rice-beer.

Near the pillar is a grave built up in the modern Hinduized [177] fashion and protected by a little shed.

Near Massenar, at the end of a long row of *uraskal* menhirs is the pillar in memory of the famous Kopa Dhurwa. This is much more slender than the one at Dilmilli and is not so well carved. But it has carvings of Kopa himself on his elephant with the inevitable umbrella, a gun and a tobacco pouch. On his chest is a small circle which I was told represented his Jubilee Medal. The pillar is further decorated with carvings of men dancing with the bison-horn head-dress, boys and girls dancing with a pot of rice-beer, a man trying to drag away a girl by the hand, crocodiles,

764 porcupines, peacocks, fish and tigers. The carpenter had put in a representation of Hanuman, but the Marias, knowing little of
532 him, supposed it was a policeman included to emphasize Kopa's dignity.

The pillar also has, or had, pigeons on the top and there was a trident, though the Marias were ignorant of its meaning. 'It is the pole's turban,' they said. 'It is made of iron to save us the trouble of renewing it.'

It is obviously impossible to describe all these pillars[1]; in 1942 they were to be found near Chitrakot, near Killepal, at Lalaguda, near Sirisguda, at Taragaon, at Kumalnar and at Garda. I saw a very simple one at Chingner in honour of an important member of the Lekhami clan. It was standing out in the jungle by itself; there were three rows of lozenges cut in the wood near the top and a single carved pigeon above. It was still red with oil mixed with *geru*. At its foot was a flat stone supported on two others, the *kanal-garya*. From the top there hung a strip of cloth, possibly a bit of the dead man's dancing dress.

It is important to note that these pillars are closely associated with the megalithic culture of the Marias. Sometimes both a menhir and pillar are erected for the same man; sometimes the pillar stands at the end of a row of stone monuments. It is not, therefore, in any sense a substitute for the *uraskal* but a supplement to it. I have noticed a similar combination of stone and wooden
[171] monuments among the Lanjhia Saoras who have come under Kond influence.

It is tempting to suppose that the various animals and birds carved on the pillar have some totemic significance, but I doubt if this is so. In the first place, every pillar has a wide variety of animals portrayed upon it; in the second the people themselves say that these animals simply represent the ordinary objects of the chase and are carved to indicate some of the interests of the dead man. Each pillar in fact attempts to be a biography in wood of the deceased.

These notes are desultory enough, but they do at least give me
114 an opportunity of paying some tribute to the man whose endless docility to facts has enabled him to make so striking a contribution to science and whose great-hearted affection for the aboriginals has led him to propose a policy and establish principles which, if adopted by the National Governments of the future, will preserve freedom and happiness in the hills and forests of India. There is much that is tedious in anthropology, much that hardly seems worth while,

---

[1] The pillar of Marvi Oyami Masa, the homicide, is described in detail in *Maria Murder and Suicide*, p. 201.

much that cannot conceivably be turned to practical advantage. 114
It needs a mind like Mr. Grigson's which can see the whole, grasp the meaning of the culture, love it and use it. He is one of the few who, in Blake's words, has 'the power to make the inside of the Cave seem Infinite'.

Verrier Elwin

Patangarh Village.
Mandla District
August 17th, 1945

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

A NOTE ON THE MARIA GONDS OF CHANDA AND DRUG DISTRICTS

114 I HAD planned for this Indian edition of *The Maria Gonds of Bastar* a long note on the Marias of the zamindaris of the Chanda and Drug districts which border on the country of the Hill Marias of Bastar, and the Muria country of the former Paralkot zamindari and the Antagarh (now the Narairpur) tahsil of Bastar. From 1940 to 1942 I held various secretariat appointments at Nagpur, but was also simultaneously entrusted with the duty of investigating the conditions, throughout the Central Provinces and Berar, of the so-called aboriginal tribes. Thus, unlike most occupants of secretariat pews, I was occasionally able to escape from the tedium of that distressing and almost universal complaint, the files (as they were once described in a witty farewell speech by a great provincial administrator), to the backwoods, their green and mountainy valleys, and their scattered Korku, Baiga or Gond tribes, still so little outwardly changed from the state in which Sir Richard Temple, the first Chief Commissioner of the newly formed Central Provinces had seen them eighty years before, when, as Forsyth[1] wrote :—

> 'Then were seen strange sights in that unknown land ; when distant valleys and mountain gorges, that had heard no other sound than the woodman's axe, echoed to the horse-hoofs of the tireless Chief, and his small knot of often weary followers ; when the solitary Gond or Byga clearing his patch of millet on the remote hillside, was astonished by the apparition, on some commanding hill-top, of that veritable 'Government' (Sirkar) in the flesh, which to him and his for several generations had been an abstraction.'

Alas, with every year seeing new additions to the statute book of India and of the provinces, each adding more and more to the burden of files and desk-work, it has long been increasingly rare for the Gond or Baiga to see the Sirkar or any of its minions in the flesh, and rare for the district officer to be able to tour off the beaten track in the backward, forest parts of his district. Hence the growth of the aboriginal problem, the task of enabling the tribesman to preserve his own culture and values, even the very acres which he won from the jungle or inherited from his father, against the

---

[1] Captain J. Forsyth, *The Highlands of Central India* (London, 1889), pp. 17-18.

invasion by land-hungry Hindus of the highlands and backwoods, 114
with its accompaniment of money-lenders, cloth pedlars, lawyers' touts, landlords and forest contractors.

The terms of reference for my aboriginal enquiry directed my 657
special attention to the conditions in the tribal tracts which had been declared Partially Excluded Areas under the Government of India Act of 1935. Those are the tracts, speaking generally, where the tribes still constitute a majority of the population and by thus being able to preserve much of their own traditional way of life can still present something of a united front to the invasion of new settlers and new ideas.[1] The Partially Excluded Areas of Chanda district include the huge Ahiri zamindari of Sironcha tahsil and the Garchiroli tahsil zamindaris of Dhanora, Dudhmala, Jharapapara, Khutgaon, Kotgal, Muramgaon, Palasgarh, Rangi, Sirsundi, Sonsari, Chandala, Gilgaon, Pai-Muranda, Potegaon and Gewardha. My enquiries therefore gave me a long desired chance of seeing the Marias of
Chanda. These zamindaris have a total area of 4,013 square 161
miles, mostly of hill and forest, and had in 1941 a population of 115,031; this figure included 70,821 'aboriginals', so that out of every 1,000 persons, 607 were tribal. In the 1931 census 34,776 of the Gonds of these zamindaris were returned as Marias, against a total of 34,986[2] Marias for all the British districts of the Central Provinces, leaving only some 210 Marias for the *khalsa* areas of Chanda district and the zamindaris of the Partially Excluded Areas of Drug district. The total strength of the Maria tribe in the British districts of the province is given in the 1941 census summary as 39,553,[3] district figures not being shown. Almost all of these will have been returned from the Chanda Partially Excluded Areas.

It has been indicated in this book how vague are the terms 101
'Maria' and 'Muria',[4] and how all the tribes thus vaguely designated speak of themselves as Koitor or Koi, distinguishing between one group and another by such terms as Highland Koitor, or Lowland or Plains Koitor. Let it be remembered that the word Maria is not a Gondi word and that *all* Gondi-speaking Gonds throughout the Central Provinces and Berar and Hyderabad State speak of themselves as Koitor; then it will be realised how unprecise, unscientific a term 'Maria' really is. Here in these Chanda zamindaris it is

---

[1] Any investigator of tribal conditions soon realises that the tribesmen inside the Partially Excluded Areas are not yet in as bad a plight as their kinsmen outside those areas, in the more 'advanced' districts, where they are steadily losing such land as is left to them and sinking to the status of landless labourers in the service of those who have expropriated them.

[2] and [3] *Census of India*, 1941, Vol. I, Part I, Table xiv, p. 118.

[4] See pp. 35-6, 42, 44, 46-50.

101 often difficult to say where the Koitor begin or cease to be Maria. Much depends on the idiosyncrasies of the census enumerators. Moreover just as in Bastar there is really no hard and fast ethnological boundary line between Hill Maria and the tribes generally referred to as 'Muria', so in Chanda to the north and west of the zamindaris many now classed as Gond would undoubtedly at one time have been regarded as Maria, while where Chanda district borders on the west of the Narainpur (Antagarh) tahsil of Bastar the villagers are ethnically identical on both sides of the border, but on the Chanda side are called Maria and on the Bastar side Muria: of this I had a remarkable instance on my journey north from Surjagarh[1] in Ahiri zamindari to Jarawandi,[2] where the forest track crosses the two small west-protruding tongues of Bastar shown near the north-west corner of Bastar in the ethnographic map on page 40, near the Antagarh villages of Udcha[3] and Irpanar[4] in the southern tongue and Markanar[5] in the northern tongue; men of one clan living in the tongues called themselves Muria while their fellow-clansmen in the adjacent Ahiri villages called themselves Maria.

Drug district, Chanda district and Bastar State all meet at the
101 north-west corner of Bastar, as the map on page 40 makes clear. At
161 this corner of Drug are the Drug Partially Excluded Areas, the zamindaris of Aundhi, Koracha, Panabaras and Ambagarh-Chauki transferred to Drug from Chanda in 1907. These zamindaris had in 1941 a population of 82,202, of whom aboriginals numbered 51,452, or 626 in every thousand. Of the latter some 16,750 were returned as practising the tribal religion, and the bulk of these must have been Gond. No 'Marias' were returned. Yet again, especially in Aundhi and Koracha, there is no racial difference between those returned there as 'Gond', their Chanda neighbours returned as 'Maria' and their Bastar neighbours returned as 'Muria'. Reference to land revenue and settlement records even in Panabaras zamindari[6] shows that down to the great famines at the end of the nineteenth century and even later the local headmen and ryots were frequently recorded as Maria by tribe.

101 All that in fact can safely be predicated of the country covered
131 by my tour in the Chanda and Drug zamindaris is that according to

---

[1] *Ordnance Survey of India*, Qr. Inch Sheet 5A, ref. MV4774.

[2] Ibidem, ref. MQ5121.

[3] Ibidem, ref. MV4898.

[4] Ibidem, ref. MV5298.

[5] Ibidem, ref. MQ5314.

[6] See for examples Grigson, *The Aboriginal Problem in the Central Provinces and Berar* (Nagpur, 1944), pp. 79-81.

Central Provinces terminology it was Maria country, or had till recently been thus considered; according to modern Bastar terminology it would be considered Muria country. To this there is one exception. The map on page 20 shows a projection westward into Chanda district of the Abujhmar Mountains between the western border of the State and the Kotri River, north of the Indrawati, just west of the junction of the Behra Mar, Jatwada and Farsal *parganas* of Narainpur (Antagarh tahsil) shown in the sketch-map on page 33. On this projection of the hills there are, speaking from memory, seven or eight villages which are definitely Hill Maria like the adjacent Abujhmar villages of Bastar, completely Hill Maria in culture, peopled by tribesmen who, like the Hill Maria of Bastar, call themselves Meta (Highland) Koitor, and despise the Maria of Lahiri and the other plains villages of Ahiri zamindari below their fastnesses. 101 131

I was able to make a rapid tour through much of this Chanda and Drug country in December 1940, and January 1941; certain preliminary investigations before my visit were made for me in Chanda by Mr. J. D. Kerawala of the Central Provinces and Berar Civil Service, who was then the Sub-divisional Officer, and he was with me throughout my tour. Some of the administrative and economic notes made on this tour were incorporated in various chapters of my book *The Aboriginal Problem in the Central Provinces and Berar*[1] to which I shall refer hereafter as *The Aboriginal Problem*, for the sake of brevity. I also filled a thick note-book with ethnographic and anthropological material, and had intended to use that material for this Note. Unfortunately the note-book perished when my house at Hyderabad was burnt down in a sudden senseless riot on the Ides of March 1946, along with almost all my Chanda photographs, the note-books, manuscripts and photographs of twenty-five years in India, and the whole of my library. No doubt this has simplified packing to quit India, but so far as this Note is concerned it has meant depriving it of what would have made it most valuable. It has therefore to be written from memory, and references in *The Aboriginal Problem*. 114

Let me now describe the tour generally, mentioning the places visited and the persons and things seen. My first halt was at Allapilli[2] in Sironcha tahsil, the site of the teak saw-mills of the provincial Forest Department, a few miles from Ahiri,[3] the headquarters of the Ahiri zamindari, which I visited from Allapilli. 100

---

[1] Nagpur, Government Printing, Central Provinces and Berar, 1944.
[2] *Ordnance Survey of India*, Sheet 65A, ref. MV0832.
[3] Ibidem, ref. MV0149.

000 The Zamindar, Mr. Dharamrao Bhujangrao, is himself a Raj-Gond, Atrāmi (6-god) by clan (*pari*); he was then a member of the provincial Legislative Assembly and had been for a short time a Minister in the Provincial Government. His huge estate comprises 2,545 square miles in Sironcha tahsil and 55 square miles in Garchiroli tahsil. The *District Gazetteer*[1] describes almost the whole estate as consisting of 'one unbroken range of forests', drained by the great Wainganga, Pranhita and Indrawati rivers and their tributaries. 'On the extreme east stretches a simple maze of hills of considerable height, which fill almost the whole of the large tract east of the junction of the Palmāgotam,[2] Paralkot and Indrawati rivers at Bhamragarh.[3] These hills[4] attain a height of from 2,000 to 3,000 feet and are absolutely inaccessible to any kind of vehicle. Some distance south of Ahiri itself are situated the Bhimaram and the Dewalmāri hills, and to the east of these lies another range of hills known locally as the Mallanāgutta range. The greatest length and breadth of the estate are each about eighty miles, and, with the exception of Government forests of an area of about 82,000 acres which have been acquired in its interior, it is altogether uninterrupted by other properties.'

In the 1931 census Ahiri had in all its 2,600 square miles
161 only 358 villages, 7,748 occupied houses and 40,450 inhabitants,
162 a population, that is, of only sixteen to the square mile. It is thus by far the most thinly populated area of the Province. Even the other Chanda zamindaris had 38 persons to the square mile, and the zamindaris of the Sanjari (Balod) tahsil of Drug district 94. Ahiri's population included 28,968 followers of tribal religion, of whom only 43 were literate, 97 Brahmans, 8,842 Hindus, 2,042 Depressed Classes, 427 Muslims and 72 others. The followers of tribal religion nearly all were 'Maria'. The Hindus would include some hinduized Gonds near Ahiri and along the Pranhita Valley and the Chanda-Sironcha road; but of all the 34,776 Maria enumerated in Chanda district only 274 returned their religion as Hindu and even of the 95,358 other Gonds in the district only 25,302 were Hindu.

It is remarkable to contrast the effect on the tribal population

---

[1] *Chanda District Gazetteer* (Allahabad, 1909), p. 449.

[2] The quarter-inch *Ordnance Survey of India* sheet does not record the name. The three rivers which meet at Bhamragarh are the Indrawati, the Kotri (which is the Paralkot here mentioned) and the Nibra, which in this book (p. 25-7), I have called by its Maria name Nei Bherat ('Dog River').

[3] *Ordnance Survey of India*, ref. 65A, MV6750. See p. 22 for an account. The confluence of the Indrawati and Kotri or Paralkot rivers is illustrated facing p. 182 of *The Aboriginal Problem*.

[4] These are the projections into Ahiri of the Abujhmar Mountains already mentioned.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

565
177

It is remarkable to contrast the effect on the tribal population of Ahiri of two influences, that of the zamindar and his administration at Ahiri and that of the Allapilli forest depot. The zamindar as a practising Raj-Gond, related both to the former royal house of Chanda and to the neighbouring zamindari families of Kutru and Bhopalpatnam in Bastar State, might be expected to be in some sense a focus or rallying point of tribal culture. But he and his relatives and agents (so far as the latter are Gond) are representatives of what Verrier Elwin describes as culturally the fourth class of aboriginals, the old aristocracy of the country who 'retain the old tribal name and their clan and totem rules and observe elements of tribal religion though they generally adopt the full Hindu faith and live in modern and even in European style'. He adds that the members of this fourth class may be said to have won the battle of culture-contact, since 'aristocratic tradition, economic stability or affluence, outside encouragement, a certain arrogance and self-confidence characteristic alike of ancient families and modern enterprise, have enabled them to assimilate the blessings of civilization without injury to themselves'; but he wisely reminds us that 'such educated progressive persons are not necessarily, simply because they are of aboriginal stock, the best qualified to represent their poorer brethren, of whose needs they often have only an elementary knowledge'.[1] The zamindar of Ahiri at least on the economic side has done much to preserve his tribal ryots from the evil effects of such sudden contacts as have reduced to 'despair and degradation' Elwin's third class of aboriginals, 'those who under the influence of external contact have begun to lose their hold on tribal culture, religion and social organization'.[2] He has accordingly himself been active in efforts to save his people from alien money-lenders, and was, for example, an active and valuable member of a voluntary debt conciliation board that worked in Sironcha tahsil in 1935-6.[3] Yet the fact that Ahiri, as the headquarters of the estate administration, especially when the estate has been under the Court of Wards, has become a centre of the modern way of life, has brought to Ahiri and Allapilli and all the adjacent villages a steady influx of outsiders, mostly Hindu, as officials, contractors, cloth and salt dealers, money-lenders and cultivators. The Dasehra festival, attended by ryots from all villagers coming to honour the zamindar as their Raja, has accustomed even remote Maria villagers to certain fundamental Hindu ideas. The Court of Wards administration has proceeded on its ruthless, standardized lines, to impose on the

---

[1] The quotations are from *The Aboriginals* (Oxford Pamphlet on India Affairs, No. 14, Bombay, 1943), pp. 10-11.
[2] Ibidem, p. 10.
[3] *The Aboriginal Problem*, pp. 285-6.

565 177 tribes controls and practices[1] evolved in non-tribal areas. Culturally therefore on the whole the zamindari administration has had a detribalizing influence. Economically by encouraging the opening up of the country and the settlement of outsiders it has led to economic exploitation of the Marias by money-lenders, village watchmen, and forest contractors.

655 466 166 The Allapilli forest depot on the other hand, with its sawmills attracting a constant stream of Marias as seasonal labourers, cartmen, etc., and with all its operations conducted departmentally by the Forest Service, has saved the aboriginals from exploitation by forest contractors and money-lenders. It has helped tribesmen to pass through the early stages of the difficult transition from an economy in kind to a cash economy. Rent and land revenue have to be paid in cash, salt and cloth to be bought for cash. Remote

---

622 791 [1] For example, the suppression of *podu* cultivation, or the deliberate curbing of the traditional influence of the religious and secular headmen, the *bhumia* and the *gaita*. A footnote to p. 453 of the *Chanda District Gazetteer* by the then Court of Wards Manager of the zamindari thus describes the latter process:

> 'The *Bhumia* is a Maria institution. He is the man responsible for all the religious ceremonies of the village; all the arrangements for their observance are framed by him, but the actual ceremony cannot be carried out without the help of the *pujari* of the village. In return for his services he is paid dues in grain and *mahua* from every tenant in the village. The office used to be hereditary and was transferable by sale or gift. The *Bhumia* was generally a man of great influence, and no village was founded or could hope to thrive without his formal permission. He was very much the headman of the village, and the office is even now highly prized. The *Bhumia* is not necessarily always a headman or *Gaita* of a village: sometimes the offices of *Bhumia* and *Gaita* are separate; this separation usually is due to poverty or loss of influence on the part of the *Bhumia* which necessitates the appointment of a man in a stronger position to manage the village, though the *Bhumia* still continues to draw his dues so long as he has not sold or transferred his right. *Gaita* is the term in general use for headman or *patel*. Before the estate came under the Court of Wards the *Bhumia* and *Gaita* were a power in the land, and it lay with them to make or mar a village, and the zamindar very seldom, if ever, received his full dues; the *Bhumia* and *Gaita* paid for one plough and cultivated five or six and in many cases also appropriated the rents of tenants who took up lands in the village.
>
> 'This has all changed since the estate came under Court of Wards and the position of the *Bhumia* and *Gaita* have been clearly defined at settlement. The former is now purely and simply considered a religious official, and has no connexion with land whatever; the office is heritable but not transferable and the original appointment of a *Bhumia* to a waste village rests with the zamindar. The *Gaita* is now simply a headman or *patel*, who is paid a commission of two annas in the rupee on rentals and one anna in the rupee on *siwai* (miscellaneous) income as remuneration for his services.'

There could scarcely be a clearer example of administration divorced from anthropology. Imagine deliberately dissociating the *Bhumia*, the Earth-priest, from the land or *bhum*. Fortunately tribal custom has still proved too strong for the complete success of this 'reform'.

interior villages send down their young men in relays to work for wages at Allapilli. There they get prompt and regular payment and 655
just and fair treatment. There are resting-sheds where the Marias 466
can sleep, leave their scanty personal possessions and take their meals in clean surroundings, not divorced from their own kind. 166
The Forest Department are arranging ever-improving facilities for them to purchase cloth, grain, salt and ornaments at fair prices. Forest work is in itself a technical training. At one time also the local officials tried to establish at Allapilli a small carpentry and basketry school.[1] Everywhere on this tour I met Marias who were on their way either to or from Allapilli, or had worked there from time to time in the past and looked upon it as a place to which they could always go to earn quickly any cash needed for payments of rent, fines or bride-price. More than one passage in *The Aboriginal Problem*[2] describes the Marias' consciousness of the fact that the Allapilli departmental forest operations have saved them from debt and distress; the establishment throughout the Chanda zamindari forests of similar 'Allapillis' was one of my recommendations. Allapilli has further been the one thing that has saved the Marias from the economic ruin that they feared when the Court of Wards and district authorities by a sudden ukase stopped their *podu* or *dahi* cultivation.

From Allapilli we motored eastwards by forest road and by estate forest tracks, generally motorable after slight repair in the 426
open season, to Bhamragarh, halting a night on the way at Pirmeli; it was some fifteen miles from Allapilli to Pirmeli, and another twenty-three on to Bhamragarh. I had been preceded on this tour by Mr. Kerawala inquiring into debt at each big village, and the neighbouring village *bhumias* and *gaitas* and the *patti Sendhias*[3] from miles around gathered again to repeat to me what they had already told him. The first such gathering was at Mirkal[4] and the next at Pirmeli itself. At both places we heard much about money-lenders and their methods, and I therefore reproduce from *The Aboriginal Problem*[5] the gist of Mr. Kerawala's report on what he was told at Mirkal and Wateli;[6] those whom he saw at Wateli came to my camp at Pirmeli.

At Mirkal he enquired particularly into the economic and social 426
conditions of the Marias of Mirkal, Sagangatta and Kasampalli villages. He found that many were heavily in debt to Hindu 563

---

[1] *The Aboriginal Problem*, p. 283.
[2] Pp. 257, 332 and 366.
[3] See p. 287.
[4] *Ordnance Survey of India*, Sheet 65A, ref. MV2148.
[5] Pp. 180-2.
[6] *Ordnance Survey of India*, ref. MV4955.

426 563 money-lenders of Ahiri and Rajaram.[1] Few loans had been taken in cash, and the borrowers being unable to read or write had to depend entirely on the word of the money-lenders. Mada, son of Bodka Maria, of Sagangatta had borrowed Rs. 20 for wedding expenses ten or eleven years before from a Rajaram money-lender, and since then had been repaying him from time to time, generally in kind; he admitted however that he had also taken occasional loans of seed grain. He had no idea of the rates of interest and no means of checking his account, but had been told by his creditor that he now owed him Rs. 100. Korke, son of Kesu Maria said that his 'kind' *sahukar*, Chinwar Poshatti of Ahiri, was good enough to have gone on accepting for years whatever he had been able to pay towards a debt of the details of which he was completely ignorant. A Sagangatta villager had borrowed Rs. 40 twenty years ago from a Kalar money-lender in Ahiri for a wedding and, though he had since repaid many small sums and had given his creditor a bullock and a cow, had been told that he still owed Rs. 100; he said that the Kalar would never explain how he worked this out, but he thought the heavy rate of interest to be the reason why the debt still grew. Generally the Marias said that if they needed seed, they could only get it from the Ahiri and Rajaram money-lenders, who advanced seed on condition of repayment with 25 per cent. interest at the next harvest or 50 per cent. at the second harvest if they defaulted at the first; no consideration was given to failure of crops, and it was only on the promise of payment of 50 per cent. interest that further time was allowed for repayment of principal.

Similar tales were told at Wateli and at my Pirmeli camp by the very large gatherings of Marias. As at Mirkal, cash loans were few but nearly all had taken seed loans at rates of interest varying, even for punctual repayment, from 25 to 50 per cent., and going even higher than 100 per cent. in the event of default. Even if cash is borrowed, interest is paid annually in grain until the borrower can find cash to repay the principal. In fact the money-lenders seem to reckon on perpetual interest in kind on petty initial loans of five to ten rupees. Thus a Maria from Khandanwadi village had borrowed Rs. 10 from an Ahiri Kalar four years before; in each of the first and second years he had paid grain worth Rs. 10 merely as interest, but in the next two years his crops had failed, and he expected in the fifth year to have to pay either Rs. 40 or Rs. 50 worth of grain. A Maria from Pokht village had borrowed Rs. 5 six years ago, from a Telugu money-lender of Indaram, but as he had repaid nothing the Maria headmen said that he was a ruined man, as the money-lender's claims must have so swollen that the Maria would never be able to repay during his lifetime, and the debt would devolve on his sons. Another Maria from Irakdumme village had 426 borrowed Rs. 20 bride-price from an Echli money-lender ten years 563 before and had so far paid him paddy worth Rs. 22-8 as interest, but nothing towards principal, and had no idea what the final demand of his creditor would be. Another Maria from Batanfundi village had borrowed Rs. 12 from an Ahiri money-lender six or seven years ago and though he had repaid the principal was still being dunned for Rs. 40 worth of grain as interest, and was afraid that this high rate would now be doubled, as owing to the crop failure of 1939 he had been unable to repay any grain that year.

---

[1] *Ordnance Survey of India*, ref. MV:1833.

Throughout this area a crying need is an agency for advancing small seed-loans. The Government have seldom done this, on the theory that the zamindar should meet his tenants' needs; but we could not find one who had ever been given a seed-loan by the estate. The rates of interest extorted by the nests of money-lenders at Ahiri, Rajaram, Allapilli, Indaram, Echli and other centres are preposterous. The need for these seed-loans has been imposed on the Marias largely by the arbitrary stopping of their *podu* (*dahi*) shifting cultivation; *podu* fields always produced seed grain at least. Such is the pathetic honesty of the Marias that when the Debt Conciliation Board was working they readily acceded to the money-lenders' request to place their thumb-marks by the hundred on application after application begging the Board not to interfere between them and their money-lenders: it was only by persistent effort that the Board secured nearly 800 applications. In our camps the Maria elders opposed debt relief measures on the ground that if a man borrowed it was only right that he and his heirs after him should go on repaying. The final report of the Debt Conciliation Board of 1936 mentioned some fantastic cases. In one a Telugu Komti of Indaram had lent a Maria of Koreli a bullock on hire in 1920, at the usual fee of Rs. 4 worth of paddy. For twelve years the Maria went on paying Rs. 5 worth of paddy. In 1932 the Komti made out that the Maria still owed him Rs. 700 worth of paddy, and proceeded to show against him further compound interest of 50 per cent., until, when the Board took up the case, the Komti claimed as much as Rs. 2,320 worth of grain—all this for the hire of a single indifferent bullock. This, however, pales into insignificance against an Echli case of a money-lender lending Rs. 32 to finance a wedding a few years before, and in his accounts showing this debt, despite a repayment of Rs. 20, as having risen to Rs. 17,519!

At every halting place and camp the Marias' chief grievance, 241 however, was not so much the exactions of money-lenders as the 735

241 economic disaster caused by the arbitrary stopping of their *dahi*, *podu* or *jalapod* cultivation. They said that they did not need this 735 for profit, but to save their lives. 'They urged that if *jalapod* were allowed in a reasonable manner they would always be able to produce enough corn even in years of deficient or irregular rainfall. The men said that in the former days of *jalapod* cultivation they usually cultivated a plot for two years and then left it for five or six years, within which short period *palas*[1] and other forest growth grew high enough for them to cut and burn again."[2]

Mirkal, Pirmeli and surrounding villages are within the orbit of 177 Allapilli and Ahiri, and the average Maria was clearly exposed to 291 Hindu culture contact, of which the outward sign was the wearing of coats and shorts purchased from Ahiri market or from itinerant Mahar pedlars.

The *District Gazetteer* records that the Maria house in the 342 remoter parts of the zamindaris is occasionally very substantial, with walls formed of barked logs laid horizontally and kept in position by upright posts, the interstices being daubed with mud and the whole being thatched with jungle grass.[3] There still are many substantial huts in the villages between Allapilli and Lahiri, but I formed the impression that the standard of housing had deteriorated, possibly because of stricter regulation of felling of trees for domestic purposes.

On the twenty-three miles drive from Pirmeli to Bhamragarh 273 we passed several villages rich in toddy palms, and often saw Marias climbing the tree trunks by rough 'ladders' lashed to the trunks 656 consisting of bamboo stems with the stumps of their side-shoots cut short to act as rungs. The climbers carry, slung round their [46] waist and hanging down like tails, thick bamboo tubes to catch the tapped juice, as described on page 168, sometimes also they take up big gourd bottles. The Provincial Government has for a long time pursued a wiser excise policy in South Chanda than in other tribal areas, of allowing Marias free tree-tapping licences for domestic consumption in certain scheduled villages. The licences are valid for three years and the number of trees that may be tapped is restricted according to the population of the village and the number of trees available for tapping. This applies in much of the Maria country to the *caryotis urens* or sago-palm, the juice of which, as in Bastar, is much preferred to that of the ordinary toddy palm. This privilege had been accorded only to 239 villages of Sironcha tahsil and 58 of Garchiroli tahsil. The selection of villages had been somewhat eclectic; some large villages with only a small Maria or

---

[1] *Butea frondosa.*

[2] *The Aboriginal Problem*, p. 185.

[3] *Chanda District Gazetteer* (Allahabad, 1909), p. 208

Gond element had been scheduled, and many others omitted. It was unsound also to confine the privilege to Marias and Gonds, for there are many other aboriginal or semi-aboriginal tribes, such as Pardhan, Halba, Nagarchi, Thoti and Ojha, and artisan, grazier and untouchable castes living in close symbiosis with the Marias, who should get this concession; such an extension would reduce cases of illegal tapping, possession, sale and transfer, and minimize excise subordinate officials' opportunities for harassment and extortion. One of the worst agents of exploitation in aboriginal areas has been the Kalar excise contractor. The Maria here, thanks to this toddy and sago-palm concession, and the availability therefore in his village of this free source of mild intoxicant and the yeast vitamin, has long been far freer of economic thraldom to the Kalar than the other aboriginals in the province who have not had this concession. Moreover the Maria does not seriously abuse this privilege, except perhaps by occasionally selling or giving toddy to non-Marias. I strongly opposed a Nagpur proposal that 'a beginning should be made in the direction of regulating the drinking of toddy by the Marias of Sironcha' who, it was said, 'literally subsist on toddy for some months of the year and are drunk most of the time'. There may be some truth in this theory of drunkenness in regard to the teluguized plains, villages of Sironcha outside the zamindari, as noted of similar South Bastar villages on page 168. But of the Ahiri Marias it is quite false. For one thing the morning and evening climb of the palm-trees by rough bamboo ladders calls for nerve, and would be impossible for a drunkard. All through this tour I never saw a Maria drunk on toddy. Nor in the average Maria village are there enough tappable trees available to cause a tenth of this alleged general intoxication. 273 656

Just near Bhamragarh in one village bitter weeping came from a woman whose husband had been hauled off that morning for illicit tapping of toddy in an excise raid. As usual the main lament was not so much against this being treated—to my mind needlessly—as an offence, as against the social consequences of being handcuffed and imprisoned. Here we were close to the Kasansogh Togh or Kasansur Turri and other islands of the Indrawati formerly the subject of a boundary dispute between Chanda and Bastar, which I had settled in my voyage down the Indrawati from Kutru in 1927; across the river lay Pharasnar, headquarters of a sub-zamindari of Kutru zamindari, where I had then camped. The ethnographic map on page 40 marks the population of the Bastar bank here as mixed Dorla and Hill Maria, or Hill Maria who have almost become Dorla; and on page 52 I have noted that though on both sides of the river the villagers seem to be of Hill Maria origin and still exchange 101

101 brides, yet in the census of Bastar they were recorded as Murias.

000 Bhamragarh village itself had few Maria residents. Celebrated though it is as a beauty spot, to my mind the junction of the three rivers there can only be appreciated in its full beauty from the Bastar shore or, better still, from midstream, as I saw it first in 1927. This time we stayed in a forest rest-house on the Indrawati bank, and the Zamindar who had motored out to join me talked under the moon till late at night on tribal problems.

164 744 Yaws has long been a scourge of the Marias, in Chanda as in Bastar, but whereas the campaigns against yaws, begun when I was in Bastar and carried on with unremitting energy ever since by Dr. W. P. S. Mitchell, the Chief Medical Officer of the State, have now almost eradicated the disease in Bastar save for fresh infection from contacts with Chanda Marias or Hyderabad Gonds and Koyas, in Chanda it is still very rife. Bhamragarh gave us an example typical of the difficulties which may beset schemes for helping the aboriginal in the absence of constant supervision of local minor officials. In 1936 the Government had opened a dispensary at Bhamragarh, primarily with the idea that it would become a centre for yaws treatment. Mr. Kerawala visiting Bhamragarh just before my tour, finding that hardly any yaws or other patients attended the dispensary, inquired why, and was told that the Assistant Medical Officer posted there was demanding a fowl and eggs from every Maria as a fee for each injection. His plea was that he had extreme difficulty in getting supplies, so that unless he could 'live on' the Marias he often had to go back by cart the 38 miles of forest track to Allapilli to get supplies, which meant closing the dispensary for nearly a week at a time. One of many things into which I was looking during this tour was the progress in Chanda of the first year of an anti-yaws campaign financed from a Government of India grant. Before that campaign began such anti-yaws work as had been attempted had been haphazard and unplanned, and nothing had been done to ensure that each patient took the full number of injections needed for a permanent cure. At all my camps in the Marias country patients streamed in for treatment, and as the Sub-assistant Health Officer deputed to accompany me for yaws work travelled in my lorry and had to stop in every village on our way to treat yaws patients, our arrival in camp was generally long after dark. The incidence of yaws seemed far greater than the Public Health Department had imagined. We had cases, as I have said, at every camp, perhaps especially among the Hill Marias at Kuvakodi, in Lahiri, and in all the villages between Pirmeli and Surjagarh, and thence on into Aundhi zamindari in Drug district;

Marias, Gonds, Marars, Mahras, Halbas, almost all communities 164
were infected. At Jarawandi and in the villages of the Jharapapra
and Aundhi zamindaris along the Bastar border many Maria and 744
Halba villagers contrasted the Central Provinces Government's lack of care for them in Chanda and Drug districts with the anti-yaws and other public health work over the border in Bastar. It is of course only comparatively recently that doctors have recognized the existence of yaws as a distinct (and easily curable) disease which responds to treatment similar to the usual syphilis treatment; the *District Gazetteer*, for example, refers to the disease as 'a mild form of leprosy named "Gondi rog" '.[1]

Another thirteen miles of forest track, fairly easily negotiated 241
by cars, brought us from Bhamragarh to the large village of Lahiri,[2]
the headquarters of a *Sendhia's patti*, as mentioned at page 287. 312
Lahiri lies at the foot of the Abujhmar Mountains, and beyond it no wheeled vehicles could proceed. Between Bhamragarh and Lahiri we saw several examples of the skilful *gatta* cultivation of the Marias, thus described in Lucie-Smith's 1869 Chanda Settlement Report:—

> 'In *gattas* the land above the dam is cultivated. To construct a *gatta*, a miniature valley with gently sloping sides, through which a stream flows, is chosen. The space between the banks of the stream is built up in the hot weather with trunks of trees, having their thinner end towards the point from which the current flows, and across these are fixed smaller logs and brushwood. The upstream face has thus a gentle slope to the front, while the rear face is almost perpendicular, and is sometimes strengthened by vertical stakes. The barricade is carried from four to eight feet above the level of the banks, and is then heaped with earth. As soon as the first rains have softened the ground, sods, about fifteen inches long by twelve broad and five thick, are dug with a heavy teak implement called a *katwa*, and with the sods wing embankments are built. These are run out in continuation of, and level with the log barricade, until the rise of the valley reduces their height to about a foot, when they are sloped off to the front and flanks; and pipes of *mohwa*, *en* or *gougool* are put through. Similar *gattas* are constructed at convenient distances at other points of the stream, and if the situation be favourable, twenty of these *gattas* may be seen spanning the valley in regular series. Surplus water passes round the flanks of the *gatta*, and sometimes in floods, the stream tops the dams and cascades over. Rice is planted in the wet ground above the dam, and, where there is a succession of *gattas*, water, if required, is passed from a higher to a lower level through the wooden pipes in the embankment. Some of the *gattas* rise to twenty feet above the stream bed, and are very substantial structures, flooding large areas.'

This skill is slowly making its way among the Hill Marias, and the illustrations facing page 146 of this book of a Hill Maria dam at Tondawada in Bastar are really of a typical *gatta*, including the hollow tree-trunk pipe. That this traditional skill persists and has developed into a real irrigation technique has been shown by Rao

---

[1] *Chanda District Gazetteer* (Allahabad, 1909), p. 99.

[2] Spelt Lahir on *Ordnance Survey of India*, Sheet 65A, ref. MV8455.

241 312 Bahadur D. Lakshmanswamy in his 1922-4 Sironcha and Garchiroli Settlement Report, paragraph 31 :—

> 'Agriculture in parts of these zamindaris is as thorough as in the most advanced *khalsa* tracts. One has simply to look at the extensive rice fields and *gattas* of the Madias [*sic*] to admire the almost mathematical levelling of their field embankments. The Maria Gond has a genius for rice cultivation. He selects the best *silan* position area, and with an intuition for irrigation lays out his fields one below the other so as to utilise water from the field above to that lower down. A natural stream or spring of water is generally never allowed to go waste by him. He so embanks and diverts the supply by a system of well arranged water-channels as to utilise the whole supply for his rice area, however distant it may be. Even in the remotest part of the zamindaris agriculture has now developed beyond the domestic stage and assumed the commercial stage. The aboriginals constituting the greater part of the population of these zamindaris mostly live on the early rice, small millets and beans, while the heavy rice grown in the big *gattas* and embanked areas is exported to the markets.'

241 Now it should be noted that this means that for his own subsistence the Maria still relied on the grains and beans dear to his heart, and grown by *dahi* or *jalapod* cultivation, which had not then been stopped except in parts of Ahiri. The growth of heavy rice 241 as a commercial crop is yet another sign of the transition from an economy in kind to a cash economy. Of this the money-lender takes 426 full advantage.

563 For in these plains villages around Bhamragarh and Lahiri, besides Marias and Gonds there are nests of Teli exploiters, notably in the six villages of Lahiri, Mallampodur,[1] Kukurmeṭa,[2] Arawara,[3] Dodrai[4] and Idadapalli.[5] Many of these Teli money-lenders are now wealthy, as a result of small grain loans to the plains Marias and Gonds. The *modus operandi* is repayment indefinitely at rates of interest so high that the principal can never be repaid, while interest takes the form of a steady and heavy share of the debtors' harvest. Some of the Telis resort habitually to molestation of their debtors until the latter satisfy their yearly demand, but though molestation of debtors is now a cognizable offence under the Debtors' Protection Act, the police in their far distant police station at Etapalli never take action against molesting money-lenders. We have seen already on page 102 how these Telis' tentacles had spread to such Bastar villages as Nugōr in Kutru Mar in the Indrawati valley, where there were big matting paddy bins in the main street in which all the rice seed of the village was stored on behalf of the Telis, who were free from time to time to remove all paddy from the bins surplus to the Marias' seed requirements, while each Maria villager was free to help himself to seed on the understanding that at harvest

---

[1] References on *Ordnance Survey of India*, Sheet 65A :
1. MV7951
2. MV7654.
3. MV7055
4 and 5. Not marked.

241 426 563 he would repay with 50 per cent. interest.[1] Although it is clear that these Teli, Kalar and Telugu money-lenders do levy an exorbitant toll on the Maria villagers' produce, it is equally clear that they are fulfilling a necessary function, which has become the more necessary since the stopping of *podu* or *jalapod* cultivation below the hills has restricted the Marias in most villages to permanent rice cultivation on small acreages always dependent on seasonal rainfall evenly distributed in time. If such money-lenders are excluded, then they must be replaced by Government grain depots and village grain banks.

764 Of Maria funeral rites the *Gazetteer* observes that a stone or a carved post about five feet high is usually put up to mark the spot where a man's body has been cremated, and that 'sometimes one comes across a forest glade strewn with these memorials, the only sign of some deserted village, the very name of which has perished'.[2] Many rows of carved wooden posts may be seen between Bhamragarh and Lahiri, while at Lahiri itself I saw scores of such posts and of the small cromlechs (*kanal-garya* or 'thrones of the Departed') described on page 273, and mentioned in the *Gazetteer*[3] as built on the spot where the body was burned. [532] The top of one of these very substantial funerary posts, or *kanal-gutta*, photographed at Lahiri, is reproduced as one of the illustrations in this Supplement. Noticeable are the carved wooden horns, between which is a carved wooden bird, probably a hornbill. The wooden horns are common, and probably are a modern symbol of the cow formerly sacrificed at the erection of a menhir or wooden *kanal-gutta* by Hill Marias[4] and Bison-horn Marias[5] throughout Bastar: the funerary customs of the Chanda Marias seemed, however, to be Hill Maria in type, and this was confirmed by oral enquiries at Lahiri.

541 656 The addiction of the Bison-horn Marias and of the Kutru Hill Marias of Bastar to cock-fighting has been described on page 162. I particularly inquired if the weekly cock-fights at Oikal in Ahiri zamindari, there mentioned, and at Lahiri itself still went on. But all cock-fighting among Chanda Marias had for some years been stopped under orders from an inexperienced young European District Superintendent of Police on the theory that it contravened the Gambling Act. But the Marias maintained that, as in Bastar, so here, there had never been cash betting (as, indeed, one might expect in a region where all transactions are still so largely in kind), but the defeated bird had passed to the owner of the winning bird.

---

[1] For further details, see *The Aboriginal Problem*, pp. 183-4.
[2] *Chanda District Gazetteer* (Allahabad, 1909), p. 106.
[3] Ibidem, loc. cit.
[4] See pp. 278-9.
[5] See p. 281.

541 656 Such iron knives or spurs as were tied on to the cock's legs were very small, and a Lahiri Maria criticized the usual theory that this way of increasing a cock's natural armament is cruel on the ground that if it meant a quicker death for the defeated cock it was merciful. All the headmen promised that if the ban on cock-fights were lifted they would frown on cash or grain betting, and, if we so desired, on the use of iron spurs and knives. Thoughtless officiousness such as that which stopped this favourite tribal pastime is only too typical of the lack of imagination with which officials, great and small, are apt to interfere with all that lends colour to aboriginal life.

615 618 114 Lahiri was one of the chief camps where I questioned the local Marias as to their clan organization, particularly the grouping of clans into phratries according to the number of *Chuddur penk* or Little Gods. I mentioned on pages 194-5 my doubts as to the traditional accounts of this god-grouping among the Chanda Marias. But these accounts go back to Lucie-Smith's 1869 Chanda Settlement Report. A somewhat confusing summary of his account, on page 101 of the *Gazetteer*, seems to imply that there is little difference between the god-grouping of the Raj-Gond, the other Gond tribes of Chanda. Lucie-Smith divided the Raj-Gonds into a four-god group, with the tortoise and crocodile totems, a five-god group with the iguana totem, a six-god group with the tiger totem, and a seven-god group with the porcupine totem: these groups were divided into what the *Gazetteer* calls 'houses or families, distinguished by their family name or *padi*', i.e. into what in this book have been called clans (*pari*), which numbered 28 among the Raj-Gonds, 24 among the Marias and 17 among the Dhurve Gond. Russell and Hiralal (Vol. III, p. 66) say that in Chanda :—

> 'There are four main groups worshipping seven, six, five and four gods respectively, and each group contains ten to fifteen septs. A man cannot marry a woman of any sept which worships the same number of gods as himself. Each group has a sacred animal which the members revere, that of the seven-god worshippers being a porcupine, of the six-god worshippers, a tiger, of the five-god worshippers, the *saras* crane, and of the four-god worshippers, a tortoise. As a rule the members of the different groups do not know the names of their gods, and in practice it is doubtful whether they restrict themselves to the proper number of gods of their own group. Formerly there were three-, two-, and one-god worshippers, but in each of these classes it is said that there were only one or two septs, and they found that they were much inconvenienced by the paucity of their numbers, perhaps for the purposes of communal worship and feasting, and hence they got themselves enrolled in the larger groups. In reality it would appear that the classification according to the number of gods worshipped is being forgotten and the three lowest groups have disappeared.'

They suggested that this conjecture was supported by the fact that in Chhindwara and other localities only two large six-god and seven-god groups remained.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

615
618
114

The accounts over-simplify scattered data collected without concentrated field-enquiry. Even the *Gazetteer*, in a footnote to the passage quoted above from page 101, speaks of a group of three-god Marias having lately been verified in Lahiri. Shoobert[1] quotes the late Bishop Wood as having verified the existence of a group of three-god Marias in the Chanda villages of Lahiri and Beni-Gunda near the Bastar border of Chanda district, and enquiries which the Bishop had made for me in 1929 by the Rev. S. G. Patwardhan, the well-known Indian missionary priest of the Scottish Episcopal Church Mission at Ahiri, went further, as indicated on page 195, and established definitely that the Chanda Marias of Bidri, Yemla, Burgi,[2] Uddera and Kandodi had one three-god clan, six four-god, eight five-god, eight six-god and eight seven-god clans (31 clans against Lucie-Smith's 24). Russell and Hiralal are wrong even of Chhindwara district, where I verified some three-god clans (as in Nagpur district) and even a one-god and a no-god clan. Baron C. von Fürer-Haimendorf's forthcoming book on the Raj-Gonds of the Adilabad plateaux of Hyderabad will deal exhaustively with the god-grouping[3] of the Adilabad Gonds, whose social system is based on a system of four phratries (*saga*), the seven-god, six-god, five-god and four-god phratries. His conclusions there have been to some extent foreshadowed in his interesting article 'The Cult of the Clan Gods among the Raj-Gonds of Hyderabad', published in *Man in India*, Vol. XXV, 1945, pages 149-86. His field-work has been far more detailed and closer than any previous work among Raj-Gonds, and the whole body of myths which he has recorded as to these phratries or god-groups throws altogether new light on the origins and facts of Gond social organization. It badly needs to be supplemented rapidly by similar enquiries among all the sections of the Gonds not only in Chanda district, but also in all the Central Provinces and Berar districts and States where this god-grouping still persists. One is apt to assume that it is dying out or deteriorating rapidly in areas formerly known as British India, in contrast to areas such as Adilabad, which has never been under British rule, and has been till recently free from the detribalizing, hinduizing work of the schoolmaster, or as most of the Chanda Maria country. But the difference may be rather that the Gond of the more

---

[1] *Central Provinces and Berar Census Report*, 1931, p. 334.

[2] I checked this at Burgi (*Ordnance Survey of India*, Sheet 65A, ref. MV3842) and discussed the whole question with Rev. Patwardhan at Ahiri: the 31 clans may be far from exhaustive.

[3] Haimendorf prefers to speak of 'seven-brother', 'six-brother' phratries, holding that his Raj-Gonds speak of a classification by the number not so much of *pen* (gods) as of *Wen*, an almost untranslatable term meaning 'heroes', or 'divine ancestors'.

advanced' areas further north, faced by Brahman ridicule of his
618 culture, has more and more withdrawn into his shell and learnt to
114 conceal the more intimate features of his tribal religion and culture.

Until we have before us the records of such systematized and
174 widespread field-work it is impossible to form any reliable general
theory of the origin of this god-grouping. My tentative view, so
611 far as the Chanda Marias are concerned, for what it is worth, is
618 that the god-grouping is a comparatively recent importation from
their northern and western Gond (especially Raj-Gond) neighbours. As I have pointed out on pages 194-5, the Bastar Marias and Murias have neither god-grouping nor *chuddur penk*. I added that none of the Chanda Marias who had come to my camps in Bastar had these institutions. This may appear inconsistent with the definite proof of the existence at least of god-grouping among the Chanda Marias, as recorded from Lucie-Smith's time onwards, and verified by Bishop Wood and Rev. Patwardhan and in this tour of mine. But here again one must distinguish between the Chanda Marias of the hills above Lahiri and those of the plains and foothills. Those who came to my Bastar camps were all Chanda Hill Marias: those among whom god-grouping was verified were plains Marias. I camped for four days at Kuvakodi, a hill village high above Lahiri, and visited other hill villages close by both in Chanda and in Bastar. The Chanda Hill Marias are identical in culture with the Bastar Hill Marias, and like them had, at least at Christmas 1940, no god-grouping and no *chuddur penk*. The Hill Marias of Chanda in fact appear to be what the *Gazetteer*[1] describes as the Gaita sub-tribe of Gonds, and the speakers of the dialect referred to by it[2] and in the *Linguistic Survey* as Gattu, the language of the 'Kois or Gonds of the hills, especially in Sironcha', who 'are known as Gattu or Gotte Kois'; for it speaks of the Gaita Gonds as being 'almost alone in retaining the old Gondi custom, once universal, of building their village in two long barracks lying east and west facing each other about eighty feet apart' in which the married people dwell, while the bachelors, and in some villages unmarried girls also, have separate barracks. This description clearly fits the Hill Marias of Kuvakodi and adjacent hill villages, as it would do the villages of the neighbouring Hill Maria *parganas* of Bastar.

So we start with these, the most primitive of the Marias of Chanda, and find among them no trace of god-grouping or *chuddur penk*. Down the hill we come to Lahiri, and we find god-grouping (which, however, includes a three-god group absent among the Chanda and Adilabad Raj-Gonds), but, so far as I could ascertain, no *chuddur*

[1] *Chanda District Gazetteer* (Allahabad, 1909), pp. 97, 98.
[2] Ibidem, p. 73.

penk corresponding in number to the number of gods of the god- 174
group, and apparently no domestic cult except of the Departed.
As you go northwards beyond Surjagarh or north-westwards towards 65
Chand the Marias begin to understand the meaning of god-grouping
and of *chuddur penk*, but even there seemed to me—admittedly my 618
enquiries were superficial—to have no such vital interest in these
things as a typical Raj-Gond or Dhurve Gond. This would be
explicable on a theory that this god-grouping was something gradually
imposed, not necessarily deliberately, but by infiltration and
imitation, by the Gonds of the ruling house of Chanda and the
aristocratic Gond zamindars, under the feudal system grouped about
the Chanda Maharaja, upon the whole 'Maria' substratum of the
Gonds of Chanda. The Marias probably represent one or two early
waves of Gond migration southwards or, at least the Hill Marias, an
earlier pre-Gond race with Veddid, Malid or Munda affinities.[1]
There are differences between Chanda Hill Maria and plains Maria
speech, the former being as guttural as Bastar Hill Maria; but
all Chand Marias speak a form of Gondi very different from the
Gondi of the Raj and Dhruve Gonds of Chanda, which would support
the view that the latter represent different waves of migration,
later moreover in view of their very advanced social and political
organization and their aristocratic elements: compare also the
position of the Pardhan bards and musicians in Raj-Gond life with
their rarity in Maria villages. It is probable also that the ancestors
of many who now are called Raj-Gonds a few generations back were
Maria. The *Gazetteer*[2] mentions that though Marias do not now
(1909) intermarry with Raj-Gonds, the records of the Ahiri family
show that they once did so. The very term Raj-Gond in my view,
as expressed on page 36, arose from the process still common whereby [177]
as sections of aboriginal tribes became Hinduized or acquired
political power they distinguish themselves from the main body of
their original tribe, so as to fit into the caste system. There can be
little doubt that as the Raj-Gond kingdom of Chanda grew in power
leading local Gond or Maria headmen or elders who fitted into
the social organization of the kingdom came to be regarded as
Raj-Gond: compare also the discussion earlier in this Note[3] of the
meaning of the term 'Maria' and its disappearance in Drug district
terminology in very recent times.[4] What, therefore, could be more

---

[1] Comparable with, for example, the Kolams of Hyderabad and Berar, or the Hill Reddis of Hyderabad, Madras and Orissa. The late Bishop Wood on hearing Bastar Marias talk said that to him it sounded like Gondi spoken with Mundari accent and intonation. See also R. C. Roy on pp. 317-18

[2] *Chanda District Gazetteer* (Allahabad, 1909) p. 101

[3] P. 377.

[4] P. 378.

174 natural than for the backward Marias aspiring to raise themselves
to Raj-Gond status to copy gradually the Raj-Gond social organiza-
615 tion? It is equally possible that *pari passu* the Raj-Gond ruler
and nobles encouraged this: in all these semi-feudal, semi-tribal
618 states and sub-states, as to this day in the States and zamindaris of
Chhattisgarh and Orissa, the Maharajah of the State or the Rajah
of the zamindari remains the final arbiter in caste matters, even often
conferring the right to wear the sacred thread on communities
actively hinduizing themselves. At Surjagarh and Jarawandi
camps, various *Sendhias* and headmen practically admitted to me
that god-grouping was not originally a Maria institution.[1]

264 From Lahiri there was a long climb of thirteen miles to the Hill Maria village of Kuvakodi, when we halted for four days, including Christmas Day. The track led at first up the valley of the Lahiri river, then up the side valley of a small tributary, and so by an exceptionally steep ascent on to an undulating plateau, across which we reached Kuvakodi at dusk, our camp equipment all being carried on poles by Marias, whom on arrival we rewarded not only in cash but, in Bastar fashion, with salt and beads, and a feast of pork: the Marias sat ranged by clan and village, and those who killed and cooked the pork distributed to every man and child, and to the women of Kuvakodi, a portion of the meat off each joint of the pig. On the way up a slight detour took us through the small village of Gudumundi, and from Kuvakodi we visited Podewara and the Bastar village of Nelangari, some five miles from our camp.

751 Each day started with a parade of yaws patients for inoculation, all from Chanda villages: the Bastar Marias, who came in to see me and to join in the dancing each evening, looked tolerantly on, having themselves long before had the benefit of the Bastar anti-yaws parties.

241 The whole cultivation system of the Chanda Hill Marias is identical with the Bastar system described in Chapter VII of this book: it is, that is to say, *penda* cultivation and not what is generally known in the Central Provinces as *dahi*, or its Chanda plains variations of *khameri*, *jalapod*, *podu* or *sampod* (these terms will be explained later in this Note). There is the same broadcast sowing on the same kind of clearings of seed of all the minor millets and beans. The

---

[1] Haimendorf in reviewing Shamrao Hivale's *The Pardhans of the Upper Narbada Valley* has pointed out that the fact that the Pardhans' clan organization is everywhere based on that of the local Gond, does not disprove the different origin of the two peoples, for there are many examples of other tribes adopting their Gond neighbours' system of phratries and clans. He instances from Chanda district and Hyderabad State not only the aboriginal castes as certain Maratha blacksmiths and brass-workers who have the same clan names as the Gonds, *Man in India*, Vol. XXVI, 1946, p. 231. Compare also the Kurak fishing tribe in Bastar, pp. 163-4.

same ceremonies and festivals are observed in connexion with 241
cutting and firing of the *penda*, sowing, harvesting and first eating
of the new crops. Most of the reaping of the 'big *kosra*' crops had
been completed, but that of the '*os kosra*' millets and pulses was
still in progress. For many of the *penda* plots in the current *haghai*
cultivation clearing (see p. 107) this was the second and last year
of cultivation, and the *kuthi* crop raised was known as *hiwar*, a term,
according to the *Gazetteer*,[1] always technically applied to these second
year crops. I sent specimens of both *hiwar* and *kosra* or *kohala*
(see p. 134) for identification to the Nagpur Agricultural College:
botanically both were identical. These villages have never had the
advantage of the special system of poll-tax assessment on every
able-bodied axeman in the village which I devised for Bastar
(p. 145). The system followed in these hill villages of Ahiri is roughly
this. Each *penda* is cut by a number of villagers with the approval
of the *gaita*, and the portion cut by each of them is roughly marked [476]
by one or other of the methods indicated on page 131. Help is
taken from other villagers, who are always ready to give this mutual
aid, and at harvest the produce is divided among the different shareholders
of the *penda*, with something also for all who helped to clear
the *penda*; sometimes a number of plots are specially earmarked
for division of the produce by the *gaita* and elders amongst all who
joined in clearing the whole *haghai* and in watching and fencing the
crops; a part of the produce is also allocated to villagers too old [736]
and feeble to work. The zamindar's *hamdar* or agent is paid rent,
usually in kind, by the *gaita* for the whole village, for paying which [427]
the *gaita* takes a share of the produce of each *penda* plot. The
village cultivation is in fact a truly co-operative enterprise.

I have alluded above to the arbitrary stopping in the plains
Maria villages of the Chanda zamindaris of *dahi* cultivation, and the
consequent increase of debt among the Marias. This Kuvakodi hill
tract is fortunate, however, in having escaped this prohibition;
it is the only Ahiri area where *penda* reigns undisturbed. It was [426]
therefore no surprise to find not a single case of old debt among the
fifty or sixty Hill Maria cultivators who assembled at my camp from
Kuvakodi and the other hill villages. Occasionally when crops are 241
poor and the *hamdar* has to be paid rent in cash, the *gaita* goes to a
Teli money-lender in the plains to borrow the money. But the 426
villagers look on this as the debt of the whole village, not of the
gaita, and though the Teli is as unscrupulous here as in any plains 621
village in exacting high interest, yet the combined villagers are
usually able to repay in kind in a year or two. Nowadays sometimes
not only they, but even their Bastar neighbours, instead of resorting

---

[1] *Chanda District Gazetteer* (Allahabad, 1909). p. 170.

241 to the Telis, send relays of young men to earn the needed cash by
426 working at Allapilli, and it is noteworthy that these workers do not
621 regard the wages thus earned as their individual property, but as the
earnings of the village which sent them there and provided them with
food for the journey. Let us hope that the economic self-sufficiency
which has hitherto kept these hillmen out of the clutches of the
money-lender will be preserved (which means that their *penda* must
not be stopped). They are subject, however, to three pests. The
661 first is the frequently corrupt *kamdar* of the zamindar. The
second are the village watchmen or *kotwar*, generally of Mahra or
kindred untouchable castes, to whose circles these hill villages are
attached. These Mahras have their headquarters in plain villages,
whence they make periodic tours of the hill villages to levy various
illegal dues from the Hill Marias. The third pest is the itinerant
439 cloth pedlar, usually a Mahra, who supplies cloth on credit and then
tries to levy a perpetual tribute in kind. I met one of these men in
this tour during my visit to the adjacent Bastar village of Nelanguri.
Bazaars are so remote that these pedlars, if they could be prevented
from selling on credit, and be made to charge reasonable prices,
would fulfil a useful function. All these abuses could be checked by
effective official touring: Mr. Kerawala's and my visits were
unfortunately red-letter events in the Marias' lives.

535 Dancing at Kuvakodi was all in the traditional Hill Maria
style, but sadly inferior to dances at such Bastar centres as Orcha
292 or Handawada, although at least half the dancers were Bastar
Marias. But even in physical type these Marias from the western
fringes of the Abujhmar Mountains are inferior. Here, as I noted of
Bastar during my March 1934 visit, the Maria dancer has given up
the rib-dress or *gatikarkana*, the dancing-shield and the gay head-dress
and skirt, though he still retains the traditional buttock-bells,
the songs, the *pata-binia* or ' song fellows ' and the dance-steps.[1]

535 The descent back to the Lahiri camp was almost more tiring
than the climb had been. Lahiri that evening was full of an eager
crowd, to watch the dancing and partake of the liquor that was ready
for the dancers. Here the dancing was lively and vital, but differed
in various ways from Hill Maria dancing, if of Hill Maria type. The
534 *dol* drumming was marked, even though the single-membrane
turam drum more typical of the Hill Maria was much in evidence.
301 Perhaps, however, the strongest impression was the astonishing
wealth of ' jewellery ' worn by the girls: enquiry showed that apart
from strings of beads, almost all the silver and brass and aluminium
necklets, armlets and other trinkets worn by the women had been
purchased from metal-workers in Bastar State. There seemed here

---

[1] See pp. 75-6 and 183-4.

to be a definite infiltration of Bison-horn Maria influences from 301
Bastar. The illustration in this Supplement shows some of the Lahiri Maria girls and gives some indication of the quantity and Bison-horn style of the ornaments.

Before climbing to Kuvakodi I had sent some Marias up the valley to Nugur village in Kutru Mar, on the Indrawati banks, to 574
invite to my camp the Kuruk boatmen who had taken Dr. Mitchell and myself in their canoes in November 1927, down the river from Nugur to the Jitam rapids.[1] Tati Ogha and Rajintappa, the leaders of our 1927 '*fleet*', and several of the boatmen arrived at Lahiri that evening, and recognised me, after thirteen years, with tears of joy. They were received and made at home with the utmost courtesy—that almost stately courtesy so characteristic of the Gond, whether of Marias at a feast or of Betul Gonds receiving the bride's party at the bridegroom's village; although the Bastar Hill Marias look down on Kuruks or '*Jharaman*' (netters), the Lahiri headmen could not do enough for these Kuruks, giving them the best of the food, refilling their leaf-cups with *mahua* spirit, and showing a real delight when I tied a *pagri* on each Kuruk's head, and presented them with cloth and beads, while they insisted on the strangers getting the best places from which to watch the dancing.

The motor journey from Lahiri to Surjagarh, about 59 miles in 000
all, involved a return on our outward tracks through Bhamragarh to a point three miles east of Pirmeli, thence roughly north or north-west through Kandar, Burgi and Markel villages to Chukmitapalli, and thence due east through Hitawara to Surjagarh; despite a very early start we reached Surjagarh after dark, thanks to 'receptions' in every intervening village and, above all, to delays for treating yaws patients. All these Maria villages have excellent human 883
material, and some surprises for the visitor. At Burgi, for example,
a boy dashed off to his house to emerge as a uniformed boy scout! 177
Some years before an attempt to start a boy scout movement in Ahiri zamindari had met with some initial success, but had apparently died out. Yet this boy had carefully preserved his uniform in a leaf-box, and, more hopeful, he and some other boys had preserved the memory of the lessons they had had on cleanliness and hygiene and in a minor way were still influencing the villages to carry out what they had learnt. It is often assumed that the Marias and similar men of the backwoods have never seen anything of the outer world. Comparable with the visit of a party of Bastar Hill Marias to the Allahabad Exhibition mentioned on page 71, was the fact that this boy and some other Maria youths had been taken two or three years before to a scout jamboree at Delhi. When I asked

---

[1] See p. 164.

[883] 177 him his chief impression of Delhi, he spoke of the Kutb Minar, which he told me was almost as fine and tall as the factory chimney of the Allapilli saw-mills! Either at Burgi or the next village another phenomenon was a Maria in a good tweed coat above khaki shorts and stockings with flashes, wearing over all an excellent fawn Curzon topi with a dark brown pugaree, far smarter than I have ever owned. I discovered that his clothes had all been given him by the zamindari of Ahiri, when he had become a member of the Sironcha Independent Local Board. That night, still in his fine feathers, he came to see the dancing in my camp at Surjagarh: but as the drumming swelled and the dances warmed up he found himself unable to keep up the detachment appropriate to his pseudo-*sahib* status, and gradually divested himself of topi, coat, shirt and shoes, finally peeling off his shorts to reveal beneath them the usual abbreviated loin-cloth of the Maria, seizing a drum, and joining in the dance: he was then indistinguishable from any other Maria but for his air of authority as a headman, and his 'undress' was typically Maria, as described in the *Gazetteer*[1] :—

> 291 304 'Their dress is scanty, consisting of a compromise between a *langoti* and a *dhoti*, a strip of cloth wound tightly round the waist in rope-like folds and passed between the legs with the spare end hanging down in front below the knees. Often this garment diminishes to the scantiest rag. They adorn their necks with handsome strings of beads and their arms occasionally with metal and glass bangles. Their ears are pulled out of shape by the weight of numerous brass rings with which they are usually garnished, and occasionally they wear *pagris*.'

632 This Independent Local Board for the Sironcha taluq consisted then of eighteen members, of whom only six were aboriginals, although there were 3,354 aboriginal to 2,850 non-aboriginal voters. The aboriginal members were almost all returned unopposed, and were *de facto* the nominees of the zamindar, who had had to use his full influence to persuade them to join this peculiar body! It was in the circumstances no surprise discovery that the open, mainly non-aboriginal, country around Sironcha and Ahiri got far more benefit from the Board's expenditure and services than the wild interior of Ahiri zamindari. But the Maria members were utterly illiterate and at sea in the Board meetings. It was the zamindar's influence alone that secured for the Maria areas such services as the Board gave them. Nevertheless, the mere fact that there is an independent local authority for Sironcha tahsil secures that at least this tahsil does get spent on it all that it pays in cesses and other local taxes, and a fair share of Government grants to local bodies, in marked contrast to the fate of the zamindaris of Garchiroli tahsil, who come under the tender mercies of the Chanda District Council

---

[1] *Chanda District Gazetteer* (Allahabad, 1909), p. 99.

and see the bulk of the Council's funds, including their own contributions, spent on the open and advanced tracts of the district where 632 the villagers must be placated for political reasons. More will be said on this point later in this Note, in dealing with the Garchiroli zamindaris.

The dancing at Surjagarh stands out in memory as faster and 535 livelier than any other dancing seen on this tour. The drums too were different, great double membrane drums of short sections of [534] *semur* (*bombax malabaricum*) trunks, up to 2 ft. 6 in. or 3 ft. in diameter. The *Gazetteer* well describes the typical Maria dance :—

> 'The favourite dance is a peculiar rippling step forwards, with the foot dragged, not very graceful when done by a single individual, but looking quite different when done in unison by a great circle of dancers singing a *re-la, re-la*, chorus to which the step keeps time. In some villages where the headman is an enthusiast for the pastime a trained band performs weird and wonderful step dances to the sound of the drum. At a big dance the trained band occupies the inner ring round the fire, while the common folk, men and maids, in separate rings move round in great circles in opposite ways. All are dressed for the occasion in their best, bearing in their hands weird ornaments of wicker work, with garlands of flowers on their necks, and, in their hair, feather ornaments humorously or coquettishly placed. Seen in the red glow of a huge log fire, glinting on the shining beads and barbaric ornaments of the dancers, with the throb of the drums, and the beat of many feet moving in unison to the wild music of the voices in chorus, a Maria dance is a spectacle not easily forgotten, but lingers as a characteristic scene when other details have faded from the memory.'[1]

That would well describe that wild night at Surjagarh, when the dancers, their spirits enlivened by several earthen pots of *mahua* liquor, kept up their dancing nearly till dawn. It had been a long and tiring day, and I retired early, the last thing seen from my tent before I closed the flap to shut out the blaze of the many log fires, the dust and the tramp of hundreds of feet, being our now nearly nude Local Board Member, well warmed by liquor and congenial surroundings, leading a ring of dancers and gravely demonstrating the right steps.

Next morning after an early breakfast we climbed with many of 712 the night's dancers up to the keep of the old fort that crowns the Surjagarh hills, 1,273 feet above the forests at their base, the ascent being over what the *Gazetteer*[2] truly calls a noble cliff of black ferruginous mica schist.

> 'The ascent at first is by a narrow rift in the mountain, whose sides rise vertically on either hand 600 feet in height, and then the path winds round the face of the cliff in natural steps formed by the weathering of the schist. The whole ascent has been carefully fortified by a series of stone breastworks, here thrown across the path, there perched on an overhanging ledge of rock, and if properly defended would be impracticable for troops without means of shelling. Within the keep on the summit there used to be a small tank which

---

[1] *Chanda District Gazetteer* (Allahabad, 1909), pp. 99-100.

[2] Pp. 428-9.

712 has now disappeared. The gates of the fort are lying on the top, and there is a stone platform, on which are images of horses and elephants sacred to the presiding deity, Thakur Deo. Previous to the Gond conquest Surjagarh was a noted Mana fortress and about the end of the 17th century was occupied by two famous chieftains, Sādho Vuria and Mula Vuria, who rebelled against the Chanda king, Ram Shah, and, secure in their strong fortresses, harried the low lands with impunity. At length Ram Shah granted the tract to a relative named Kokshah, who after some years of desultory warfare stormed the hill and put the insurgent leaders to the sword. Kokshah then made Surjagarh his citadel, and under its shadow his descendants, the present Ahiri family, have extended their possession, east and west, and south and north, until nearly 3,000 miles of country own them masters. The scenery of these hills is very wild, and the black glittering mass of Surjagarh, streaked here and there with patches of bright green and red, stands out grandly against the sky. The upper cliffs have a beautiful shrub, with dark green leaves and clusters of lovely blue flowers.'

There were still 38,650 Manas in Chanda district in 1931, and Thakur Deo on the summit of Surjagarh remains their tutelary deity. Also named after them is the fortress of Manikgarh in the Rajura taluq of Adilabad district. Russell and Hiralal[1] speak of them as a Dravidian caste of cultivators and labourers, possibly an offshoot of the Gonds, and associated in the popular mind with Gonds and Gowaris. They are now completely Hinduized, and have generally adopted Maratha customs. The Thakur Deo platform on the Surjagarh summit had a wealth of clay images, mostly horses, in type precisely similar to the horse images associated with Aiyyenar in South India.

137 If you stand on the summit, in whatever direction you look, north, south, east or west, all the Sironcha and Garchiroli tahsils and the Abujhmar Mountains of Bastar still seem to be one vast forest, with only occasional small yellow patches indicating village sites and cultivation. Speaking of the Chanda Marias' shifting cultivation
241 (*podu*) Lucie-Smith wrote in 1869[2] :—

> 'For the vast wilderness east of the Wyngunga it is the very best that could be devised. By it, year by year, more and more land is cleared of forest and made ready for the plough, and thus every Maria village has around it a very much larger area of open ground than would be the case if the plough only were used. No one who has passed through these great wastes, shut in by lofty trees and dense masses of bamboo, and seeing, sometimes for days, not a trace of human habitation, can fail to rejoice at the work fire and axe are doing. It is of course important to prevent the destruction of forest containing valuable timber, and to arrange for reserves of jungle wood, grass and bamboos near the cultivated tracts, but, this done, *dahi* cultivation should be encouraged. It would be idle to speculate upon the changes in temperature and in rainfall the clearance of the forests would entail, for even if the population increase to the full, and coal mines, railways and river navigation bring all the prosperity we hope they will, yet in all human probability the youngest teak seedling now springing into life will have grown old and withered to dust before the eastern wilderness shall have sensibly decreased.'

---

[1] Vol IV, p. 172, *et seq.*
[2] Loc. cit. para. 232.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

Railways have still, eighty years later, not penetrated the wilderness: the river navigation schemes proved a failure: the coal mines are well to the west. The prophecy has thus been fulfilled, but with a difference: the clearings are fewer and farther between than in Lucie-Smith's day owing to the virtual cessation in Chanda, except around Kuvakodi, of *podu* or *dahi*.[1] 241

His wise and discriminating approval of *podu* was overlooked soon after the 1922-4 land revenue settlement of the zamindaris in Ahiri and the Garchiroli zamindaris, when, without apparently any order from Government, the local authorities stopped *podu*. The *Settlement Report* had only said that the miscellaneous income received by the zamindars from *jalapod* had under standing orders been omitted from the assets on which land revenue was to be assessed, so that in case it damaged the forests, Government interference might be justified. In every Garchiroli zamindari except Gewardha *jalapod* had gone on until the 1922-4 settlement, but the total area had been found to be only 993 acres. Rao Bahadur Lakshmanswamy, the Settlement Officer, reported that it was never allowed in good quality timber forests, but only where there was a sparse unmarketable forest growth; even then there was a ten years rest between successive fellings and burnings. The rent on each clearing was recovered in grain and not in cash, the quantity per axe varying from 60 lb. in Kotgal zamindari to 200 lb. in Rangi zamindari: the rent was always substantially less for the second than for the first year of a clearing. The Settlement Officer considered that the privilege of carrying on this shifting cultivation contributed indirectly to the expansion of settled cultivation, and believed that the withdrawal of the privilege would probably unsettle the present occupants: he urged therefore no interference; the area was small, the forest valueless, the privilege kept the Marias happy, and the zamindars, alive to the increasing value of their forests since the advent of the railway and road communications, were sufficiently alive to the need of restricting *podu* and charged higher rates for it in the areas nearer the open parts of the district and the railway than in the remote zamindaris. 241 656

---

[1] This has been mentioned already in this Note on pp. 390-1 and 397. *Podu* strictly speaking is the *dippa* or *marhan* of the Hill Marias (p. 126), while *jala* or *khamari*, which is really the *dahi* of most of the province and the *parka* of the Bastar Marias, consists in the sowing of rice on low-lying plots where water naturally collects in the rains, after these plots, which generally have no forest growth, have been fertilised in May with the ashes of grass and wood cut beforehand from the adjacent forests and spread over them. On the *podu* plots, light rice, all the minor millets and beans and pulses are sown. When *mandia* (*eleusine coracana*) is sown, the cultivation is known as *sampod*. As general terms in Chanda either *podu* or *jalapod* are used. *Podu* is also the common term in Hyderabad State.

241
656

In Ahiri zamindari *podu* had been stopped even earlier. In 1917 the then Deputy Commissioner inaugurated an active policy of discouraging it in favour of plough cultivation. He decided to allow no *podu* outside village areas, to make each village *gaita* responsible for reporting the name of each *podu* cultivator and the area, as measured by bamboos, cut and sown by him, and to charge rent at the same rate for *podu* as for plough land. Failure to report any cultivation contravening the orders was to be punished in the first instance by a heavy penal rent, and, if repeated, by total prohibition of all *podu* in the village at fault. This drastic restriction was introduced in all the zamindari except the Kuvakodi Hill Maria tract. The proposals were expounded by the Deputy Commissioner at the end of his tour to several hundred *gaitas* assembled for the purpose at Ahiri. This thoughtlessly wide-sweeping measure soon led to the universal cessation of *podu*: the orders gave great scope to minor zamindari officials for harassing the Marias by alleging that their *podu* contravened the restrictions, and in the end it seemed safer to have no *podu* at all. It seems also that ultimately some Deputy Commissioner finally prohibited *podu*, though the order had disappeared when his successor looked for it in 1930.

In all my camps, especially near the Bastar border, across which *podu* is permissible in every village, the bitter complaints of every Maria showed how harshly this had operated: we have already seen how it has delivered them to the tender mercies of the money-lenders. That, moreover, Rao Bahadur Lakshmanswamy's warning that such interference would unsettle the present occupants had been justified, was proved by the widespread migration of Marias to their kinsmen's villages over the Bastar border, with their greater freedom; of this several *gaitas* and zamindars complained, notably in Jharapapra zamindari. I had a conference with the Garchiroli and Drug zamindars at Murumgaon later in the tour, on New Year's Day, 1941. Several of them complained that in the past the district officers had fined them for allowing *jalapod*, and, yet worse, that they were still often being fined for alleged felling, without the Deputy Commissioner's permission, of high tree forest whenever their ryots broke up new lands even for plough cultivation; the ryots then always burn the felled forest growth and raise the first crops on the new land by the traditional method, but officials stigmatize this as *podu*. The zamindars considered that the stopping of *jalapod* had been quite unjustified, and that if it were again allowed, but confined to commercially worthless miscellaneous forest from which at present they derived no income, it would at least bring in something to them, and above all would save the Marias from the effects of rice failures such as those of 1939 and 1940. In the former year the Marias, dismayed by the failure of rice on their plough-lands, took the law into their own hands and started cutting *podu* in the east of Garchiroli tahsil and the adjacent Partially Excluded Areas of Drug district, being to some extent incited by emissaries of the leader of an agrarian agitation in the Dondi-Lohara zamindari. It seemed to me that in their present mood they would before long again defy the restrictions and cut *podu* on a wide scale. 241 656

I recommended accordingly that their wishes should be met, as it should not be difficult to regulate *podu* by fixing a regular series of sites to be felled in two-yearly rotations. Silviculturally too there was much to be gained by this. When *podu* was first restricted and then prohibited, the miscellaneous forests were allowed to grow up just as they had been left after the last *podu* fellings, with all the old high stumps and crooked or double or treble stems. Even the patches of teak were often useless because the trees had been left to shoot from old undressed stumps. Most of this vast forest around Bhamragarh, Surjagarh and Jarawandi has no commercial value at all, and never will have unless good teak can be grown. In the neighbouring Panabaras zamindari of Drug I found that some forty years before the Court of Wards had initiated a practice of requiring *podu* cultivators to sow teak seed in the *podu* clearings before abandoning them. This did much to produce the fine forest that is now so valuable an asset of that estate. The Marias whom I met in Ahiri, Jharapapra, Aundi, Koracha, Murumgaon, Rangi and Dhanora zamindaris were most appreciative of the idea of *podu* being allowed with this condition of the sowing of teak seed in the second and last year of cultivation. All knew how the Allapilli departmental forest operation had saved the local Marias from economic ruin, and they were quick to realize that conservation of the surviving teak and the growth of teak in areas now to be selected for that purpose and sown with teak at the end of *podu* cultivation would bring teak forests, and therefore ultimately operations such as those at Allapilli, far nearer to their villages in the days of their grandchildren. Besides areas thus earmarked for teak regeneration after *podu*, there should also be fixed areas around each village where *podu* should be allowed indefinitely. The Marias also would welcome the extension to other parts of Ahiri and the other zamindaris of the precedent of the leasing by Government from the Ahiri zamindar of the forests around Allapilli: the surviving teak areas around Surajgarh would for example be suitable leased areas. In all these measures the fullest co-operation of the Marias could without much difficulty be obtained by enlisting the sympathy and support of the *bhumias*, *gaitas*, and *Sendhias*, whose authority remains real and 241 313

241 unchallenged. I emphasize the word sympathy: the method of threatening and punishing the headmen must be given up, and every
313 effort made to win their understanding support for the new measures and even to entrust them with their execution.

The walks and talks at Surjagarh delayed the start on the 32
883 miles journey to Jawarwandi, and the car and lorry were more than once bogged on the way, so that once again we arrived in camp long after dark. It was on this journey that we crossed the tongues of Bastar territory mentioned on page 378 of this Note: in the southern tongue, in fact, we were bogged for an hour or more, but, as in Bastar, were readily helped to extricate ourselves. I noticed and stopped in *gotul* or bachelors' dormitories in several villages before and after Surjagarh. Many of these are treated by touring officers as though they were rest-huts built for their special convenience, like the *chauri* of Hyderabad or Berar villages. They use them also for posting up legal notices, and in two I found nailed to the wooden posts copies of the *Yudda Samachar* or War News in the Marathi edition published by the provincial War Purposes Fund for dissemination of accurate war information in all villages; this showed singular lack of intelligence on the part of those who controlled such propaganda in Chanda district, for in these Maria villages not a person was literate and very few could speak Marathi. The *gotul* culture here must be similar to that among the Murias just across the Bastar border in North Antagarh, but in the short time available I did not overcome the Marias' natural reluctance to discuss this intimate social organization, a reluctance heightened, I suspect, by the fact that here on the fringes of the *gotul* country the institution is the butt of Hindu ridicule or prurient curiosity. But there certainly are *gotul* in these villages, at least for the youths, and I found one, with some difficulty owing to the reticence of the local Marias in these mixed villages, at Erka in Rangi zamindari. So far as I could make out, they are still to be found in the Partially Excluded zamindaris of Drug.

Jarawandi is the headquarters of a sub-zamindar holding under
632 Ahiri a taluq of twenty-three villages: the rival claims of Ahiri and Jarawandi to the seignorial dues have been a nuisance to the local Marias. Here there was a large gathering of headmen and *Sendhias* of *patti* groups of villages. Enquiries from them and later at
[623] Murumgaon showed that the *panchayat* system described in the extract on pages 286-8 of this book is not only as vigorous as ever, but is more widespread than previously recorded, there being *Sendhias* in almost every Chanda zamindari. It had been stated to me that the zamindars outside Ahiri had usurped the authority of the *Sendhia* and his *patti panchayat*, but I doubt the truth of this, and

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

the *Sendhias* and the zamindars also denied it. The allegation possibly arises from the fact that the zamindar appoints or confirms 632 the succession of the *Sendhia*, and may arbitrate in a case involving parties from the *patti* of two or more *Sendhias*. Moreover the zamindars themselves have probably often descended from the tribal headmen of old, and so it is easy for them to perform the function of ultimate arbitration in social matters which is so characteristic of the chiefs of the ancient semi-feudal organization of the province from whom they descend or derive. Obviously it would be easy to apply to all the Chanda Maria country the Bastar *panchayat* system.[1]

From Jarawandi our route took us six miles to Pendri, the 632 largest village and virtual headquarters of Jharapapra zamindari, thence six miles to Jharapapra and back; on fifteen miles to Aundhi 491 in Drug district, and thence seven miles to Murumgaon, the headquarters of the Chanda zamindari of that name; the last mile was at long last on made road, the third-class road running east from Garchiroli through Khutgaon, Dudhmala, Dhanora, Rangi, Murumgaon and Koracha zamindaris to Dondi-Lohara and Drug. We were, however, to have trouble on this road next day, when heavy rain flooded unbridged streams between Murumgaon and the twenty miles distant Manpur, the *de facto* headquarters of the Koracha zamindari of Drug. The very long delay in bridging this road and raising it in class is only too typical of the neglect by Government and District Councils of aboriginal areas.

Similarly the District Council had not opened a single school in 871 Jharapapra zamindari. The late zamindar, a Halba by tribe, and amongst the most intelligent and progressive landholders of the two districts, had opened a private school at Pendri[2] which at the time of my visit was being run by a Gondi-speaking teacher of the Marar agricultural caste, and his pupils were six Marar, six Halba and two Pardhan boys. Marias and Halbas are the chief elements in the small population of the zamindari, dwindling steadily by the drift in recent years of Marias across into Bastar for the sake of *podu*.

All along this route there had been frequent pockets of Marar cultivators, especially near the streams. These industrious, 563 progressive, dark-skinned agricultural pioneers have pushed up the valley of every substantial river in the backward areas of Balaghat, Bhandara, Chanda, Drug, Raipur and doubtless other aboriginal districts of the Central Provinces. They have been the chief factor in such increase as there has been of permanent, especially irrigated, cultivation in these Garchiroli and Drug Partially Excluded Areas.

---

[1] See pp. 295-7.

[2] *Ordnance Survey of India*, Sheet 64D, ref. M/522°

563 Pendri is now mainly a Marar village, its 451 inhabitants including only some forty Marias and sixty Halbas. They seem able to live in easy symbiosis with all Gonds, to whom they impart much of their agricultural skill. Their intrusion into these tribal areas, provided it is controlled, is therefore not a bad thing.

178 At Jharapapra there was a once familiar sight, the Halba log-god of the zamindari family, in type precisely similar to the clan-gods of the Hill Marias and the Halba log-gods at Chingnur near Bare Dongar and at other Halba centres in Bastar. The *Kutumb-Naik* headman of the Bare Dongar Halbas had told me in 1929 how some years before the then zamindar of Jharapapra had sent a party of Halbas to carry off the Chingnur log-god to Jharapapra, and how the god had resented this and 'flown' back to Chingnur from the first halting place of the god-snatchers.

000 Of the visits to Aundhi[1] and, next day, to Manpur[2] in Koracha zamindari and some way along the Manpur-Panabaras road, there is little to say except that, generally speaking, the Drug Court of Wards regime in Panabaras and Aundhi seemed to be progressive, and the Drug District Council to do more for the Partially Excluded Areas than its Chanda counterpart.

[162] 427 In the four Partially Excluded zamindaris of Drug the aboriginals form well over sixty per cent. of the population. The worst feature of these estates is that there is a *thekadari* system, originally akin to that once prevalent in Bastar, and that many of the *thekadars*, especially those on whom the semi-permanent 'protected' status has been conferred, are non-aboriginal oppressors of the local Gonds and Marias, while comparatively few aboriginal headmen, except in Panabaras and Ambagarh-Chauki zamindaris, have been declared protected. The whole original conception was wrong in that it involved conversion of the tribal headman or *gaontia* into a lessee or *thekadar* of his village. Various examples have been given in *The Aboriginal Problem*[3] of the way in which these Maria headmen were thus transformed into *thekadars*, and then lost their villages in the great famines, or for other causes, to non-aboriginal intruders, who now rack-rent and oppress the surviving aboriginal tenants. We may give here one example, that of the village of Dokhla in Panabaras zamindari. This village was settled before 1861 by a Maria headman and ten other Marias. The headman absconded during the great famines at the turn of the century. Another Gond was then given the lease, but ultimately could not pay the lease-money and had to surrender the village.

[1] *Ordnance Survey of India*, Sheet 64D, ref. MQ3349.

[2] Ibidem, Sheet 64D, ref. MQ8366.

[3] Pp. 79-81.

The Court of Wards finally gave the lease to a Hindu of the Kurmi caste, on a premium of Rs. 211. The present lessee, his son, was made protected in 1923. Though the aboriginals as a whole have not actually lost land since 1902, the lessee had been very oppressive, forcing the aboriginals who borrowed from him to surrender their fields to him and then selling them to new tenants. 427

In Panabaras the departmental working of the five teak forests, largely built up, as already stated, by the Court of Wards insisting from 1900 onwards on *podu* cultivators sowing teak-seed on their plots in the second year of cultivation, has done something on Allapilli lines to bring economic relief to the local aboriginals. These four estates have been special targets for the agrarian agitation already mentioned, which started from the adjacent non-excluded Dondi-Lohara zamindari and made a special feature of inciting the Gonds and Marias to burn *podu*. 313

In the Garchiroli zamindaris on the whole the Marias and other aboriginals continue to hold their own and to take gradually to permanent cultivation, though far more slowly than outsiders: in the twenty years after the 1922-3 settlement aboriginal cultivation had increased by only 23 per cent., but non-aboriginal by 50 per cent., there being 6,523 aboriginal tenants of 76,113 acres against 4,012 other tenants of 46,863 acres. The aboriginals still have miles and miles of land available for extending their cultivation, but always hanker after their beloved *podu*. 241 311

This *podu* question, as I have already said, was the principal topic at the conference of the Drug and Chanda Partially Excluded Areas zamindars at Murumgaon on New Year's Day, 1940. Other topics were the neglect of the Garchiroli zamindaris by the Chanda District Council, and the future of the zamindars, in view of the political threat to the whole zamindari system. To deal first with the last topic, let me say that while there may be much to be said for 'liquidation' of big landed estates, especially of absentee proprietors, the policy towards aboriginal zamindars should be different. Most of them are descendants of long lines of tribal chieftains holding estates on very ancient tenures dating back to the semi-tribal, semi-feudal systems[1] under which most of middle India was organized centuries ago. Properly speaking these chiefs in relation to their ryots and fellow tribesmen are *primi inter pares*. Some of the wealthier aboriginal proprietors of the huge Chhattisgarh estates may have aped the princeling: but most of the Chanda zamindars are closely akin to their people—the Rangi chief, for example, is frankly a Maria among Marias—and do their utmost to protect their ryots. Legally, so long as the proprietary rights in any 632

---

[1] See p. 4.

632 land remain vested in an aboriginal belonging to a tribe notified under the Land Alienation Act of the province, even new tenancies in favour of non-aboriginals require sanction. Often the existence of the aboriginal proprietor is the one thing that saves his fellow tribesmen from being ousted from their lands by Hindu and Muslim incomers. Once he disappears and free alienation of land by aboriginals becomes possible, they will soon sink finally to the level of landless hewers of wood and drawers of water, or at best of factory fodder for Nagpurs and Jamshedpurs. A recent official report on grazing and *nistar*[1] in the zamindaris frankly envisaged the disappearance of the tribal chieftains as probably a good thing; the non-aboriginal who would replace him, it was said, would bring new ideas, new capital, new progress, and therefore it would be better for the villages, which would be well managed by a non-aboriginal instead of being mismanaged or ignored by an aboriginal proprietor. What are the facts? Hardly a single 632 non-aboriginal who in the history of the Central Provinces has elbowed the Gond proprietor out of his estates has done anything 563 for the aboriginal tenantry except to reduce them to debt and helotry. Such new ideas as they have brought into the tribal villages have always tended to destroy or suppress everything good or vital in tribal custom and culture; their 'new progress' has been achieved by getting the aboriginal so heavily into debt that it has been easy to hand over his land to Hindus of castes more acceptable to the new landlord. Nor is it true that there has been no progress under the tribal zamindar: everywhere there has been a steady rise in permanent cultivation, as can clearly be seen from comparing present conditions in such remote estates as these Chanda and Drug zamindaris with the conditions recorded when the Central Provinces were formed in 1861. To the aboriginal also the fact that his *Raja*, as he will always term his zamindar whether or not Government recognize the title, is like him a Korku, a Gond, a Halba or a Maria, has great psychological significance; not all of his tribe are excluded from the seats of the mighty, and a Gond may even rule over a Brahman, and be the final arbiter in the social disputes within his estate not only of his own tribe, but even of Hindu castes. In many zamindaris, notably the Garchiroli estates, Government and District Council alike have neglected communications and nation-building; whatever there is of education and medical relief is even now largely paid for by the zamindar.

---

[1] *Grazing and Nistar in the Central Provinces Estates, the Report of an Enquiry*, by H. S. Kamath, I.C.S. (Nagpur, Government Printing, 1941); see especially paras. 358-64. *Nistar* means, roughly, tenants' rights of user of forest produce.

I have written elsewhere[1] that the Garchiroli zamindaris 632 afford a typical example of the neglect of aboriginal interests by the District Council; I might truthfully add by the Government also. 871 So far my tour had taken me into Jharapapra and Murumgaon only of these estates; my departure from Murumgaon to Garchiroli was to take me in 37 miles through parts of Rangi, Dhanora, Dudhmala, and Khutgaon zamindaris: I visited Erka in Rangi, Dhanora, Dudhmala and Chatgaon in Khutgaon.[2] At Murumgaon I met almost all the zamindars. Over most of their estates there was no school, hospital or veterinary dispensary, practically no wells had been sunk, and visits of touring public health and veterinary assistants had been rare. The zamindars told me that a number of former schools had been closed on the plea of low attendance, the reason for which was that the children, who knew no language but Maria Gondi, were bored by lessons in the alien Marathi, while the teachers, knowing no Gondi and hating exile in these forest tracts, frequently went sick, generally in name, but often in fact. At Dhanora I found a small school that had just been re-started by the District Council after being closed for six months because no teacher could be found; at last a local untrained Depressed Classes youth had been appointed and had seventeen pupils, of whom five were Marias: it was a dull, ineffective institution. The zamindar of Potegaon said that though two or three years before Government had made a grant for starting an aboriginal school at Potegaon the District Council had provided no teacher; he was paying for one from his own pocket. I have mentioned the private school at Jharapapra which the zamindar himself finances.

High hopes were placed by the first Congress Ministry of the 874 province in the *Vidya Mandir* Act, which provided for a new type of school in villages, intended to pay its way from the produce of lands attached to the school as endowments, and from the yarn to be spun by the pupils whose basic crafts were to be spinning and perhaps agriculture. I saw two of these, for which the zamindars had provided land, at Erka and Chatgaon. The attendance at both was very small, and they were in all ways utterly alien to the Maria way of life. Erka was typical. The *Vidya Mandir* fields were over a mile from the *Mandir*, which in outward appearance was indistinguishable from any ordinary plains village school, even down 874 to the faded Congress flag on the roof. The masters of these 875 institutions bear the time-honoured designation of *guru*. Here,

---

[1] *The Aboriginal Problem*, pp. 377-8.

[2] The map references on *Ordnance Survey of India*, Qr. Inch Sheet 64D, are Murumgaon MQ5461, Erka MQ4262, Dhanora MQ3652, Dudhmala MQ2849 and Chatgaon MQ2046.

874 [1825] too, no caste Hindu had been forthcoming and the authorities had had to draw on the Depressed Classes to find a *guru*, who was a town-bred Mahar, knew no language but his Marathi mother-tongue and was utterly ignorant of aboriginal life and customs, though twenty-two of his thirty-three boys were Maria-speaking aboriginals. The boys were doing some listless spinning, a useless craft in an area where no cotton is grown. The raw cotton for spinning has to be carted from Chanda, miles away: not one of the boys will spin in after-life. I asked if they could sing: the *guru* switched them from spinning on to droning out in a dreary, nasal tone a Marathi song which meant nothing to them. Helped by their parents, I tried to get the boys to sing a Maria song and dance a Maria dance, but their spontaneity had been so quenched by the alien ideas of the *Vidya Mandir* that even with their parents' help they were too shy or shamefaced to attempt their own wonderful tribal songs and dances. There was nothing in their whole curriculum which bore any relation to their tribal culture or appealed to the tribal imagination. Even the *Vidya Mandir* fields were so far from the village that the boys never visited them or learnt modern agricultural methods from the *jamadar* in charge, who merely grew rice to meet the cost of this useless institution. It was worse than useless, for it was detribalizing the boys, making them ashamed of their own way of life, and giving them nothing in return: it was no surprise that in this village all were peculiarly reticent as to the existence of a *gotul*, and that the latter was a moribund affair.

114 This completes the picture of my tour to Chanda Maria country, so far it has been possible to reconstruct it from the printed record of *The Aboriginal Problem* and from memory. Ethnologically the Note is somewhat meagre in its information. The impression, however, that I carry in my mind of the Chanda Marias is of a tribal culture still vigorous in its institutions and its arts, still knitting together the ways of life of a vigorous tribe closely akin on the one side to the Marias and Murias of Bastar, on the other side to the Raj-Gond and other tribes of northern and western Chanda, and of Milabad. What differences there are between the Chanda Marias and the Hill and other Marias of Bastar and the Murias of north Bastar and Kanker, only detailed field-work can define. It is an admirable theatre for such field-work, and the time for it is running short, since the Marias of Chanda are exposed, in a way that no Bastar tribes are exposed, to the impacts of modern Indian civilization. Of particular interest would be an investigation of my theory that the social organization of the plains Marias of Chanda was fundamentally similar to that of the Hill Marias and Murias of Bastar but has been overlaid with god-grouping and other ideas inherent in the social organization of

the later waves of Gonds and Raj-Gonds which set up the kingdom 114
of the Gond Maharajas of Chanda. It would be very interesting also to see whether anything survives of the peculiarly Hill Maria and Muria cult of the clan-god as distinct from the more developed religious system of the Raj-Gonds, with its wonderful foundation of myth, the full richness and religious and cultural significance of which the world will begin to realize when Haimendorf's epoch-making book on the Raj-Gonds of Adilabad is published in the near future, and when it is followed up by similar detailed investigation of Gond life and custom in all parts of Gondwana. How far there is any common mythological basis of Raj-Gond and Maria culture would be a factor of great significance. I am conscious that the weakest side of this book has been its failure to probe into the mythology and folk-songs of the Bastar Marias. I do not believe Hill Maria culture to be nearly as rich in that respect as Muria culture is shown to be by Verrier Elwin's book, *The Muria and their Ghotul*. Yet there must be more to be said of the folk-tales and mythology of the Marias of Bastar than has appeared in the first edition of this book; indeed the second section of Elwin's Comment in this edition gives some indication of the wealth of Maria myth awaiting record in Bastar.

Another question clearly needing investigation is the extent 114
to which the *gotul* as an institution is a real factor in Chanda Maria
life. I have implied in this Note that it survives, but is gradually 883
being relegated into obscurity as a result of the impact of Hindu
ideas and of Hindu ridicule. That would, however, apply more in 177
the northern zamindaris than in the country along the Bastar border from the River Indrawati north to Jharapapra. This part of Ahiri zamindari is landlocked and largely protected from the influx of Hindu ideas save in so far as these are brought in by zamindari and government subordinates. The fact moreover that the *Sendhia* and *patti panchayat* organization is still vigorous in Ahiri zamindari should be an indication that there has been no psychological inhibition on these Marias preserving their tribal life and cultural inheritance unimpaired. It would be interesting, however, to trace the outer boundaries of the *gotul* system and to see what has happened to it, when, and why, in these outer fringes.

This Note is stronger in its picture of economic conditions. 114
Here the most significant fact has been the banning of *jalapod* or
shifting cultivation during and after the Great War of 1914-18. One 241
would like, given the time and opportunity, to get at the psychological reaction of the Maria to this as expressed in his folk-songs; one would like also to be able to go through the records of criminal

114 and civil litigation in which Maria parties have been involved since this interference with their way of life, and to see also if it has had any 241 bearing on suicide. Quite clearly, however, it has had a tremendous and adverse effect on their economics. It has accentuated their transition from an economy in kind to a cash economy and, by virtually forcing them to grow rice, a commercial food crop, as their principal crop, it has played into the hands of the *bania* and the money-lender who naturally desire to buy up rice for export. It may be suspected also that this has had an adverse effect on the diet and physique of the Maria. The small millets, which are the characteristic and favourite food of the Marias and were best grown in the *podu* clearings, are dietetically of higher value than rice. Their market value was small, but so long as the Marias' granary had ample stores of these millets, he had not to depend upon the money-lender for seed or cattle, nor to bother about marketing his produce. 114 The only partial remedy so far provided for the economic ills caused by the stopping of *podu* has been the departmental forest work at 313 Allapilli. Here the Maria, doing work of a type for which his life in the forest suits him and receiving fair and prompt cash payment for his labour, has been able to earn money which could keep him out of the clutches of the money-lender and the bribe-taker. But this too has had its detribalizing effect, accustoming him to working far from his home village and in close contact with an alien civilization and culture.

114 The next difficulties that the Maria has to solve in assimilating himself to the life of modern India are the problems resulting from the impact of political India with its steady tendency to seek to reduce all things and all institutions throughout India to a drab uniformity. There is no doubt that the Maria is not ready to exercise the vote. It is equally clear that he has his own vigorous tribal organization and that his *patti panchayat* could easily be entrusted with the same powers that have been given to the village and *pargana panchayats* in Bastar. It seems obvious also that on these *panchayats* could be based some sort of system whereby Marias could handle the problems of local self-government in their country. These *panchayats*, for example, if entrusted with the selection of local Marias for a zamindari *panchayat*, could produce a body in real touch with tribal life in all its facets. Tribal village life is still naturally co-operative, even though in the plains individualism is now stronger than in the largely collective villages of the Hills. In fact the whole *podu* system was an incentive to the co-operation of all the villagers; rice cultivation, in contrast, drives villagers into individualism and ideas of private property as indeed does the whole land revenue system which has been

gradually foisted from the developed lands of Hindustan upon all the tribal areas of India. Yet the Co-operative Department does no work among the Chanda Marias. Such work would indeed be useless if stereotyped as usual. What is needed is a deliberate attempt to implant amongst the Marias co-operative organization of forest labour, whether for working at Allapilli or for taking coupes or contracts for minor produce in other zamindari or Government forests. Village grain-banks could be made to flourish, for after all, the existing granary in a Maria village, even if in these days the ultimate owner of the surplus is the Teli money-lender, is essentially a village grain-bank from which the villager can help himself to seed or even to grain for food if he observes the implicit obligation of replacing it with 25 or 50 per cent. interest out of his next harvest ; but grain-banks should be the property of the village and not of alien exploiters. If the Maria is to be educated so as to hold his own in the modern world, his education can best come in the first instance from the fostering of such co-operative enterprise, accompanied by protection from the alien money-lender, subordinate officials and other exploiters. Out of this economic self-government can spring the elements of political self-government.

Education is advocated generally as a means of protection. But the standardized 'education' gained in the ordinary village school has not protected the plains villager from the money-lender, and is something entirely alien to the living culture of the tribes. One of the worst features of the spasmodic attempts to provide education in the Maria villages has been the impossibility of getting town-bred teachers of good social standing to resign themselves to exile in the forest. This, as we have seen, has led to the importation of teachers from the Depressed Classes with their habitual inferiority complex. A Maria or a Gond is not an untouchable, and it is wrong to set a man of 'untouchable mentality' to teach and exercise a teacher's authority over him. The only hope of meeting the growing desire for education in a sound way is to impart education through teachers drawn from the tribe itself, knowing the tribal language and tribal lore, and thoroughly at home with tribal villagers. Both Verrier Elwin and I have on various occasions set forth our general ideas as to the soundest approach to the problem of aboriginal education ; there is a synthesis of our ideas in Chapter 14 of *The Aboriginal Problem*. But the most effective experiment in this direction within my knowledge has been the Marlavai work initiated by the Haimendorfs amongst the Gonds of the central plateaux of Adilabad District in the Nizam's Dominions. Gond youths were selected from surrounding villages, where there was a demand for education, and put through a course of training in a

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

114 village training centre where all the buildings were built of local materials in precisely the same style as the existing village houses but with improved dimensions, light and ventilation. The Gondi language is used as the medium of instruction, Laubach Gondi charts having been prepared, and Gondi primers with Gondi folk-songs, tales and myths: the teachers were also trained to teach Marathi and Urdu.[1] Model grain-banks and co-operative stores and an agricultural farm have been based on this centre which has also trained Gonds and Kolams in the work of the *patel* and the *patwari*. When he passes out, the new schoolmaster goes back to his village and with a small grant of cash and free timber has to get a rough school building constructed. These schools are visited regularly by the head of the Marlavai training centre, and there are periodic rallies at Marlavai. These methods have rapidly expanded educational facilities among the Adilabad Gonds, and the schools are kept in close touch with the vigorous tribal life; tribal games, songs and dances are an essential part of the school curriculum. What is more, the tribal headmen and elders are kept in close touch with Marlavai and its offshoots, and are consulted freely on all new ideas as to curricula and other developments. Classes for adults are also held in Marlavai and some of the village schools.

If the Maria *gotul* life is at all vigorous it should not be impossible to link it with such modern education. For the *gotul* is essentially a children's commonwealth in which the youths are instructed in the tribal way of life. If that way of life is to be supplemented by education enabling the Maria to read official documents, village records, and money-lenders' accounts and the accounts of his own co-operative societies, it would be natural in some way to link the new education with the *gotul*, and to adopt for the reading and writing curricula the songs and stories which are sung and told to the *gotul* gatherings.

003 The task of dealing with these problems has almost finally passed from British hands, and it has become the unshared responsibility of the educated Hindu or Muslim to do his best to protect the aboriginal and bring him forward to contribute to the India of the future his characteristic joy of life and his tradition of co-operating with his fellow men. Nothing will be gained by puritanical opposition to liquor, music and dancing. Much of very great value will be lost if any distinctive elements of tribal cultures are frowned upon or ridiculed. The whole problem of the future of the tribes bristles with difficulties with which we have failed to cope in the historically short period of our connexion with India; Indians themselves

---

[1] In Chanda or Drug there would be no such trilingual difficulty as it would be necessary only to use either Marathi or Hindi in addition to Gondi.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

had previously failed to solve them in thousands of years. Is it too much to hope that Indian scientists and Indian political leaders thinking on modern scientific lines and taking the advice of their own trained anthropologists will at long last set themselves to foster or preserve the happiness of the peoples of the forests and the hills, and so to enable them to contribute their own will to happiness as a major solvent of all India's problems ? 000

NOTES

000

Page 45, *line* 33. Although 'gotul' is the traditional spelling, the word is more appropriately spelt 'ghotul', for the 'h' in the initial letter is quite evident.

Page 45, *line* 34; *page* 47, *line* 4. Here Grigson was misinformed. Indeed, far from it being true that the boys and girls do not share the life of the Jhoria dormitories, they actually pair off and have a pre-marital 'marriage' in excess of what is normally practised in Kondagaon. Probably this accounts for the 'heat' with which they repudiated the suggestion that they had anything to do with each other. For an amusing account of a denial given to Rivers in somewhat similar circumstances, see R. Firth, *We, the Tikopia* (London, 1936), p. xxiv.

Page 46, *line* 16. Knowledge of the legend of Lingo, whose cult is more or less coterminous with the performance of the Pus Kolang dances, is fairly widespread among the Murias. I have recorded versions of the epic in the Antagarh, Benur and Ghat Jhorian, as well as in the Amabera, Parganas of the Narayanpur tahsil, and at Alor and Kanhargaon in the Kondagaon tahsil. The legend has been elaborately studied in *The Muria and their Ghotul*, Chapter VIII.

Page 52, *line* 10. The mixture of Hill Maria and Bison-horn Maria styles in festal dress and dancing extends into the Jagdalpur and Dantewara tahsils. The Bison-horn Marias at the Ghotpal bazaar dance in entirely Hill Maria fashion and I have seen beautiful dancing-shields as far away from the Abujhmar as at Kaklur. I suspect that in all the area round Barsur and Gidam the Bison-horn Marias follow the Hill Maria style for festival and religious dances and their own style for marriages and general entertainment. Many Jhoria Murias do the same.

Page 64, *line* 44. But I have often seen Bison-horn Marias, both men and women, standing to urinate. The custom is also common among the northern Murias, and even among so advanced a tribe as the Santals I have seen women standing to urinate against a fence or wall.

Page 66. The Bison-horn Marias usually give an impression of cleanliness; the women especially, with their carefully-dressed hair and gleaming ornaments, often look very smart. But I have noticed that many of them do not wash their hands before meals, and many

continue their old habit (shared by the Baigas and most of the Orissa 000
tribes) of wiping themselves with leaves after defecation. This custom, along with beef-eating and the breeding of domestic pigs, appears to worry that slightly ludicrous figure, the pious social reformer, far more than more obvious social evils. In Orissa, for example, earnest attempts have been made to induce the Bondos, of all people, to use water after defecation. A few have begun to do so, using the village stream (sole source of water-supply) as a latrine: the only result of these rather pathetic endeavours at 'improvement' has been to make the water-supply of a few aboriginal villages as filthy as that of many 'advanced' areas. As a comment on this curious belief that a change in defecatory habits indicates an advance in culture, I note that in a famous Indian Public School, new boys are greeted with the question, 'Do you wash or wipe?' If a boy 'washes' he is regarded as coming from a definitely inferior social stratum.

Page 69, line 31. The multiple cord belt is not worn by Gadaba women, as Glasfurd says, nor by the Bondos, as Hutton says at page xiv of his Introduction to this book; it is a certain class of Kond women, notably the Kuttia Konds and the Konds round Nimgiri, who wear it. Gadaba women wear, not a belt, but a bustle made of many separate cords lashed together; this certainly gives them 'a strange appearance'. Juang women formerly wore belts made of a great number of little earthen cubes strung on cords. Cowrie belts are still common among the northern Murias.

Page 80, line 35. Cowries seem to have come back on the market again; I have seen them on sale in the bazaars and have noticed many new cowrie belts and fringes for the bison-horn head-dress. For notes on the use of the cowrie, see Grigson's communication to *Man* (Vol. XL, p. 159) on the subject, and my article, 'The Use of Cowries in Bastar State' in the same journal (Vol. XLII, pp. 121ff).

Page 81, line 11. Marias have told me that they distinguish
two kinds of bison horn. Those of inferior quality are all-black [435
in colour. The better type are white from the root to the middle
and then dark to the tip; nowadays such horns fetch anything 439]
up to twenty rupees—sometimes a bullock is given in exchange for a fine pair. Marias go all the way from Dantewara into the Jeypore zamindari to obtain them.

Before leaving their village for a dance Maria youths often
promise a fowl to Mahaprabhu, the Village Mother and the Departed [782]
saying 'Save us from hostile magic and the evil eye and see that no feathers fall from our head-dresses. Let the drums give a good sound; let them not be broken'.

000 *Page* 86. Col. E. Clementi Smith, who commanded the detachment of troops which was sent to Bastar at the time of the 1910 rebellion, writes to me that in those days the Marias made arrowheads of bone and porcupine quills as well as of iron. He adds, 'Another thing I remember was the dislike of a guide, when moving along jungle tracks, if one came to a cock's head stuck on a stick—the guide always said " one couldn't go there ". The same objection also arose if one came to thin boughs bent over the track and intertwined. I need hardly say that we couldn't stop for these signs and one used to kick them out of the way—I think the guides expected the heavens to fall on us for such desecration. Another [436] thing I remember was that salt was more acceptable as payment than pice. We had a lot of our " enemy " enrolled as porters at one time. They hardly ever deserted. The sepoys liked them and I am always glad to know that we never caused any casualties among them.' For Col. Clementi Smith's account of the Bastar rebellion, see *Man in India*, Vol. XXV, pp. 240-53.

Page 113, *line* 35. The real taboo is not so much on intercourse [513] inside a house as on a bed. At Komhu I was told by the Hill Marias that 'no woman may sleep on a cot, for the village Pen is in it'. The Bison-horn Marias and even the Raj Gonds have the same rule. A wealthy Gond Zamindar is said to have made a platform of earth for his wife, as he would not allow her a bed.

Page 135, *line* 14. The Hill Marias do actually avoid their wives (how astonished the Baigas would be at the idea !) from the time when the *kosra* shoots appear until the threshing is over. They control themselves, they told me at Itulnar, 'by tying their cloth very tight'.

Pages 135-7. Though there is some division of labour between 462 men and women, Bison-horn Maria women are much freer to share the work of men than are the women of many other tribes. 'They are allowed, for example, to plough—a thing strictly taboo to the Gonds of the Central Provinces. But they must not carry loads on a *kawar*-pole, for if they do Dongar Pen and the Rau will be offended and bring misfortune on them. They may reap a crop, but they must not tie it in bundles or lift it on to their heads with their own hands; a man must do it for them or there may be a scarcity the following year. Women may climb trees, but not near a house; they may fish, but not hunt. They may not winnow, but they can thresh with their feet (there is an illustration of this in *Maria Murder and Suicide*) and may beat out a *mandia* crop with long poles. Men, on the other hand, may not husk rice or clean it in a fan; they should not grind, nor should they carry pitchers on their heads. They must not remove rice from the Pot of the Departed. 462

Page 169, *line* 33. Of the 100 cases of homicide examined in *Maria Murder and Suicide* 13 were due to intoxication by rice-beer and 6 to other liquors. In a further 14 cases of which Grigson kept notes, *landa*-intoxication led to 2 murders and other intoxicants to 3. c00

Page 174, *line* 5. The Murias still remember this camp and recall how Sir Montague Butler gave one of the headmen a ten rupee note as a present. That was seventeen years ago, when ten rupee notes were seldom seen. The Muria showed the note to a Forest Guard and asked him what it was. The Guard offered to buy it for a rupee, saying that was all it was worth. The Muria accepted the bargain and went off full of gratitude to the kindly Guard but doubtful of the Governor's generosity in giving him such a small reward. Quite recently a Mussalman merchant of Narayanpur was prosecuted for cheating a Muria with coloured labels which he declared were hundred rupee notes.

Page 174, *line* 9. At Dugeli I saw in 1942 a small carefully-fenced enclosure round a group of plantain trees, among which was a tall plant not unlike a sugar cane, which I was told was the 'Baiha Danda' and was used as an antidote to the bite of a mad dog. It was grown entirely for this purpose, in case the emergency should arise.

Page 174, *line* 15. The custom of blowing away disease may be illustrated by the experience of Oyami Harma of Bara Harmamunda. 'Once when I was working in my fields with some labourers I had employed, they performed magic against me and a lot of mud went into my mouth and filled my whole body. The Waddai discovered what had happened and cured me by blowing the mud out of my stomach. Another day, some people came to ask for rice. I refused at first, but they persisted and at last I had to let them have some. But they were annoyed with me and with my own rice they made hostile magic and filled my belly with it. The Waddai cured me by blowing it out.' Sucking is also practised. A Siraha places his lips on a patient's stomach and sucks. If he finds only blood in his mouth, it means a Rau has sent the disease; if there is a little earth with the blood, it indicates the Earth Mother.

Page 182, *line* 24. I have seen split-string instruments similar to the *veddur-dol* among the Bondos and Saoras in Orissa, as well as among the Jhoria-Murias; they have been noticed for the Reddis by C. von Fürer-Haimendorf, *The Reddis of the Bison Hills*, p. 348. Meerwarth reports that they are common in Malaya and Indonesia 171

171 and are found in the Shan States—A. M. Meerwarth, *A Guide to the Collection of Musical Instruments exhibited in the Indian Museum, Calcutta* (Calcutta, 1917), pp. 5f. But the Shan instrument improves its sounding-board with a hole in the bamboo and it, as with the Reddis and Bondos, is beaten with only one hand. But the Marias and Murias use plectra in both hands, with the instrument on the ground.

800 *Page* 183, *line* 17. Beside the iron jews-harp, which is also known to the Ghotul Murias, the Bison-horn Marias use a small bamboo harp of a pattern common to the Bondos, Saoras and several Assamese tribes.

Page 183, *line* 21. The *kikir* is illustrated on page 20 of *Maria Murder and Suicide*.

Page 183, *line* 34. Hill Maria dancing is rather monotonous unless there is a great deal of it. But when several thousand gather for the festival, the scene is magnificent. Grigson has described the pattern of their dance as a long curved line moving slowly in a circle, while a group of 'song fellows' move up and down before it. On a great occasion this group of singers gradually develops into a procession as boys and girls leave the line and form up behind them. This 'column of fours' may in fact entirely absorb the line; when both remain they revolve about each other.

I saw a very attractive variant on the usual Bison-horn dance in the Konta tahsil, where the women shouldered their sticks and went round with a skip and a jump. In the Dantewara tahsil I recorded five different steps used by the women.

(1) The circle moves anti-clockwise singing '*Nonile wayale*' and the steps are: right foot to right, left foot swings back behind with a pause in mid-air while the dancing stick is thumped twice on the ground. Then right foot again, and three thumps of the stick. This step is also done to a refrain '*So-lo rela re rela*' and '*So rela re rela*'.

(2) A very simple anti-clockwise circular movement. Right foot to right and left foot to right behind it. The song is about cattle and the fields.

(3) Another circular dance with the steps going right to right, left behind to right, right to right, then left over in front of right.

(4) The feet go: left, right, left to right, a pause, the right is wagged over in front of the left and towards the left for three beats of the stick. Then it is put back on the ground to the right of the left and then left right left quickly.

(5) Left in front of right, right to right behind it, then the left in front of the right and so on. In this dance the sticks are not thumped with three beats at a time, but with single beats.

000 Little boys practise the bison-horn dance with head-dresses made of bamboo rings which have bamboo 'horns' sticking up in front and at the back a spike ornamented with feathers. They beat their stomachs or use bits of wood instead of drums.

Page 189, *line* 31. But I found everywhere that both kinds of Marias were also accustomed to use the fire-drill. The fire-saw of the Hill Marias can easily be worked by two men; there is no difference between it and the Baiga or Juang saw, which is always handled by two persons.

241 787 When Bison-horn Marias go to fire their clearings, they should as far as possible approach them with their faces towards the east. The Perma and Gaita break two small branches, the Perma a dry and the Gaita a green or 'living' branch, and drive them into the ground. They light these with a burning log from the Hearth of the Departed in one or other of their houses. If both branches burn well, it is a sign that the clearing also will burn properly; but if one burns and the other does not, it means that the clearing will only burn in patches and will thus be insufficiently manured. Special offerings must then be made.

000 *Page* 225, *line* 9; *page* 278, *line* 25. In one village—but only one—at Mokhpal, I found scepticism about the tradition that the menhirs grow in size. Here the Bison-horn Marias laughed at the idea and said that, if—for example—a stone grew smaller, it was probably because the ground was damp and it sank down.

Page 225, *line* 11. The Bison-horn Marias believe that the Dead are reborn, if at all, in their own homes; they generally deny that they ever reappear as animals. Yet an animal may be born in, or have a powerful influence over, a human being. A girl at Mokhpal was born with the left side of her face covered with a sort of fur; the Marias said that an ancestor who was killed by a bear had been reborn in the child. As a result the wearing of dancing-masks covered with bear-fur has been abandoned, for fear that the wearers should be affected in some future birth. A man killed by a tiger may reappear in one of his descendants with marks of the claws on the neck. It may be that to people who live so near to nature rebirth in animal form does not seem specially distasteful. [231] Marias and Murias live close to their animals and love them. At Lakhopal there is a small menhir in memory of a faithful dog.

Page 227, *line* 12. In 1939, Soma Ganda-Maria of Gomagal killed a man, who had seduced his wife, in the most brutal manner by squeezing his testicles till they burst. He then seized his penis saying, 'It was with this that you copulated with my wife,' and tore the skin from it. Finally he throttled him. Anyone who

000 would condemn the savagery of the Maria, however, would do well to ponder Michael Angelo's painting of the Last Judgement which portrays those who have died in lust being dragged down to hell by demons clinging to their private parts.

Page 235. Koppers ('India and Dual Organization', *Acta Tropica*, Vol. I, No. 1-2, 1944, pp. 89ff.) discusses the problem of a dual classification among the Marias. He rightly emphasizes that the 'dual division of the Gonds of Bastar has nothing whatever to do with dual classification in the ethnological sense'; in any case, though there is a dual division of Marias, there is no dual division of the Gonds of Bastar who fall into several groups. Russell believed that he had found traces of a dual classification system. Grigson denied the validity of this, 'and with good reason', as Koppers says. The fact that the Bison-horn Maria phratries as such are not exogamous, 'taken in conjunction with the occurrence that the Hill Marias have almost nothing to do with phratries, leaves little doubt as to the relatively recent and secondary character of phratry organization among the Gonds of Bastar. We cannot do otherwise than agree with Grigson who refuses to see any connection between a dual classification system and these phratries as presented to us.' On the other hand, the relationships between wife-clans and brother-clans are somewhat reminiscent of 'the triple, circulative organization of the tribe described by Held'. Koppers concludes that although it is impossible to speak with anything like certainty of the existence of dual classification among the Gonds of Bastar and of the Central Provinces, 'it is another question whether in the light of future research some of the fragmentary evidence may not after all prove to be a remnant of a former dual classification system, which, in this case need not necessarily have been indigenous to the Gonds. It is at all events interesting to note that even Grigson finds himself unable to reconstruct the earlier stages of social organization among the Bison-horn Maria on any other basis than that of an "original two-moiety system". From his general impression of all the material to hand Grigson considers himself justified in concluding that all the rest must have developed out of this. For the moment his conclusion can be regarded only as a hypothesis but it is one which may well contain a certain amount of truth.'

823 *Page* 258, *line* 31. The custom of pouring water from the eaves of a house is not confined to marriages. In some Bison-horn Maria villages, a girl is given this treatment at the menarche. When her first period is over, the girl bathes and stands below the eaves in front of her house. Her elder brother's wife or, if she is married, her husband's sister or elder brother's wife, pours water

over her from the roof, and she has to catch some and drink it. 823
In some villages, again, if a man marries a widow or another man's wife, the woman must stand below the eaves with a *bassia latifolia* leaf on her head. The Waddai pours water and rice-beer from the roof, all over her, and after this she can enter her new home. When Oyami Anda of Bara Harmamunda married a girl for whom a Lamana'i youth had already been engaged, he had to stand with his rival's brother under the eaves of his house for a ceremony 'to make them forget enmity'. Anda's right hand was placed below the other's right hand, both having the palms upward. In front of them the Waddai made a heap of rice and set an arrow upright in it. He climbed on the roof and poured water over the hands of the two men who allowed it to flow down the arrow and over the rice. Afterwards Anda gave a pig and two fowls to the dispossessed Lamana'i as an offering to the latter's *hanal*. Had this ceremony not been performed, Anda—so he believed—would have suffered from a watery swelling of the body.

Page 262. Marias of both kinds are exceptionally virtuous in their sexual lives. Venereal disease is almost unknown, except 832
in the vicinity of the few schools. Several old men have assured me—and I believe them—that since marriage they had had no other woman than their own wives. Love-charms and erotic stimulants are not much in demand and are not approved. At Molasnar there was a Naiko who was said to be making some sort of living by selling love-potions to the Marias; he used to administer them in liquor or tobacco and once a woman took one of them she would follow her lover everywhere 'like a pet dog'. But a Maria said, 'If I bring a girl in this way, my store of rice will grow less for such a union is not a yoking of the house of Mahapurub, and the girl will probably leave me after a time.' Vetti Muda of Dhurli described how when he was a young man (he must have been born about 1870), he used to take a regular diet of monkey's flesh. 'As a result I became very strong and active and could hop from tree to tree like a monkey. Once when I was going through the forest a monkey slipped from the overhanging branch of an ebony tree and was killed by the fall. I cut off its organ and roasted and ate it, with the result that I became so potent that I needed four wives at once.' But it is characteristic of the Maria—as against, for example, the ordinary Gond, Pardhan or Baiga—that he should have used the word 'wives'.

Page 269, line 27. Grigson has recorded 2 Hill Maria 538
folk-tales. In my *Folk-Tales of Mahakoshal* I give 5 Bison-horn Maria, 37 Muria and 13 Kuruk stories, some of which are probably known also to the Hill Marias, for they were recorded in villages

538 not far distant from the Abujhmar. The Kuruk stories are almost certainly current also among the Bison-horn Maria. Two of the five specifically Bison-horn Maria tales, like one of the two Maria tales, are about monkeys. The first describes a helpful monkey which is treated with great ingratitude by human beings; in the second—as in Grigson's tale—a monkey marries a human girl and does not make a very great success of the union. In neither case, however, is there any reference to the dispareunia which the Baigas delight to emphasize in stories of the 'Beast Marriage' type. Two of the other tales, 'The Magic Eyes' and 'The Loving Ghost' are exceptionally charming and, while full of conventional folk-lore clichés, strike a note of some originality. In my *Myths of Middle India*, I give Bison-horn Maria legends of the creation of the world, the making of the sun and moon, the origin of fire and several stories of the Vagina Dentata cycle.

Page 280, *line* 34. In the country round Gidam and Barsur, 178 many clans that follow the megalithic tradition elsewhere have abandoned the practice of erecting menhirs, though the Barse, Kalmu and Kunjami clans continue it and erected twenty-six menhirs within the limits of the Gidam Revenue Circle in the years 1938-42. In the Jagdalpur tahsil, though the custom is less well maintained here than elsewhere, the Poyami, Vetti, Bekor, Kuharami, Marvi Padami and Muchaki at least continue to erect *uraskal* stones. Near Jagdalpur, however, and in the neighbourhood of Paknar, there has been some falling off of the practice.

Whatever may be the reason for the abandonment of megalithic customs—and I am rather sceptical about the influence of the Hindu taboo on beef-eating—certain clans have been affected by the warnings of their priests. In Vagriguda, for example, a village in the heart of an area where these customs flourish undisturbed, no menhirs are erected now because once when the village was overwhelmed by an epidemic, the Siraha declared that it was 787 because the Village Mother was annoyed at the practice. The Telami clan have abandoned the practice in the Dhurli area because once when they were quarrying a stone to serve as a menhir, a snake wriggled out of the crack, and this was taken as a sign of the divine displeasure. I believe that many culture changes in India are not due to the spread of civilization but are caused by incidents like these.

000 *Page* 281, *line* 24. The upper stone is called *danya-kal* and its supports '*odiyal*.' In the Kutru zamindari, the Akri clan calls the upper stone *gariyakal*. The Chudala Marvi clan erects both *uraskal* and *danyakal* stones throughout the Konta tahsil and in such villages as Gogonda, Mankapal and Koya Vekur. So do the

SUPPLEMENT

Sori, Miriami, Kalmumi and Markami clans. My impression was 600 that the *danyakal* stone was becoming more and more popular; it is supposed to confer a certain dignity on the family that has it; and for some reason it is said to be cheaper. Other clans which often use the *danyakal* stones are the Tati, Muchaki, Vetti, Hemla, Oyami, Birya Barse, Punem, Durro and Rawa.

Supplementary material concerning Hill and Bison-horn Maria funerary rites, will be found in my article 'Funerary Customs in Bastar State', *Man in India*, Vol. XXV. In the same volume is an important discussion on the megalithic culture of Bastar in relation to other parts of India by C. von Fürer-Haimendorf.

Page 282. Koppers has made the interesting suggestion that 171 the unbloody sacrifice of horned cattle for the dead when an *uraskal*-menhir is erected by the Marias, is a widespread custom. 'In this matter of the unbloody killing of animals destined as a sacrifice for ancestors, there is complete agreement between Gonds, Mundas and Santals', and he refers to Bodding who says that 'sacrifices to *bongas* are performed by beheading the sacrificial animal, whilst to the forefathers it is always done by a stroke of an axe-head on the neck'. The Munda also kills horned cattle for the dead in this way. (See W. Koppers, 'Monuments to the Dead of the Bhils', *Annali Lateranensi*, Vol. VI, 1942, p. 193). But how far is this distinction really due to a desire to save the skins of horned cattle? In Orissa at least the vendors of cattle for sacrifice charge an additional sum (up to ten rupees) if the skin is not returned to them intact, with the result that in many cases the sacrifice of a cow or buffalo is unbloody while that of a goat or pig is bloody. At the erection of a menhir by the Bondos I witnessed on the same day and on the same occasion the sacrifice of a pig and a bullock for the ancestors: the first had its throat cut, the second was killed by a blow from the back of an axe in order to save the skin. The Saoras usually make unbloody sacrifices of buffaloes to the ancestors but I have seen a goat (also for the ancestors) decapitated by a sword. I suspect the economic interest is primary.

[p. 428 is blank]

ILLUSTRATIONS

[p. 429]

[p. 430 is blank]

[Verrier Elwin

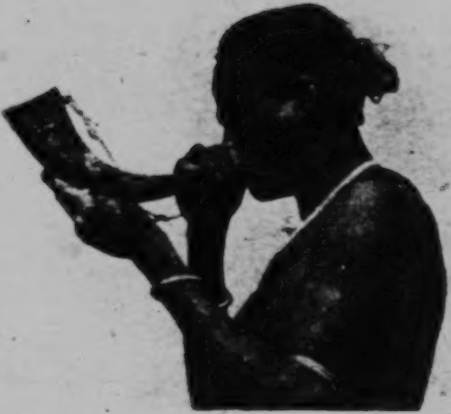
Scenery on the Sabari River near Konta

Typical scenery of the Abujhmar Mountains

[Verrier Elwin

[End Plate A]

142
301
302
224

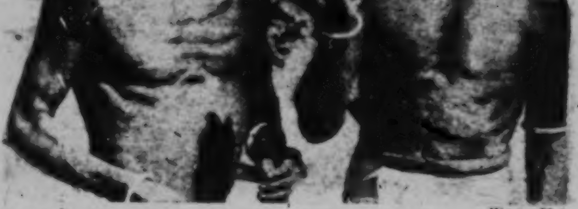


Verrier Elwin

Muchaki Pandu, Bison-horn Maria of Gogonda with hunting-horn

Bison-horn Maria of Lakhopal

142
301
304



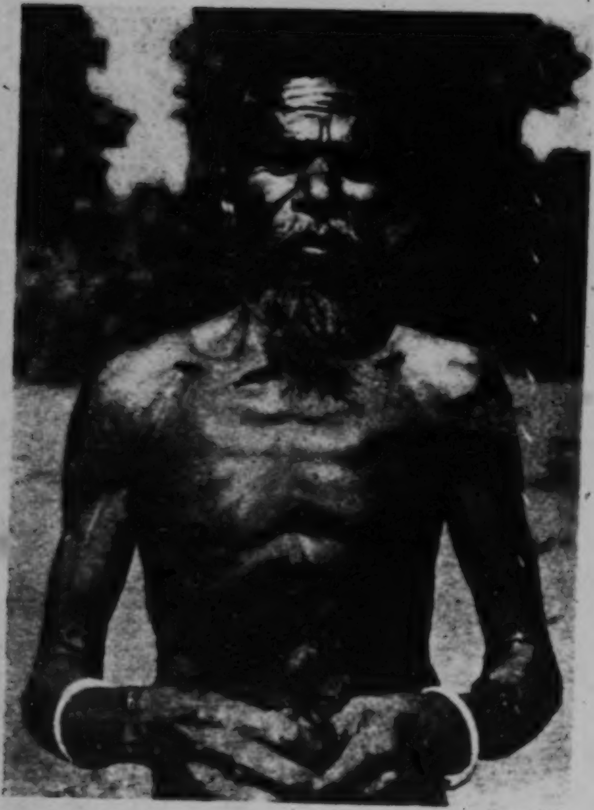
Verrier Elwin

[End Plate B]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

142
622
301



[illegible]

Markami Hunga, Bison-horn Maria headman of Maranda

[End Plate C]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

142
292
301
534

[Verrier Elwin

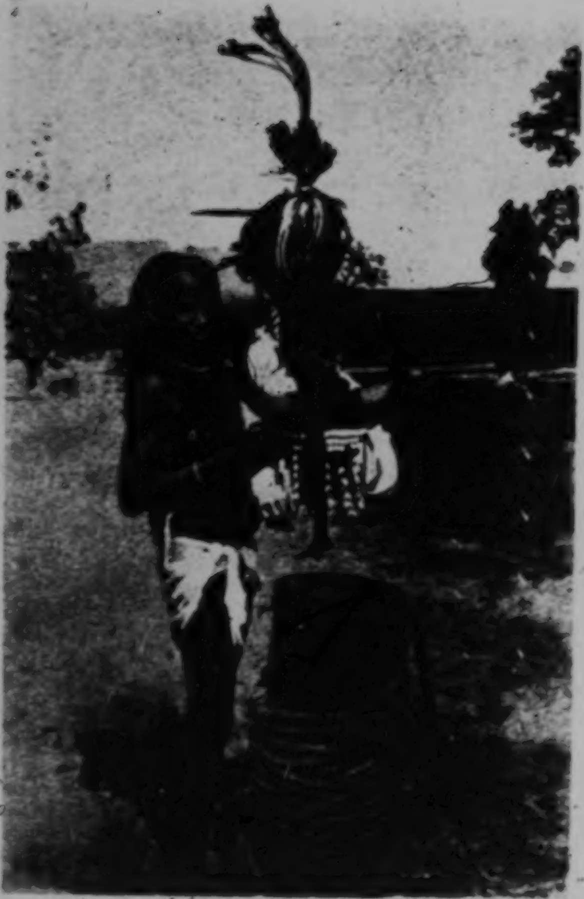
Bison-horn Maria youth of Kakler in Hill Maria festival dress

[End Plate D]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

142
292
534



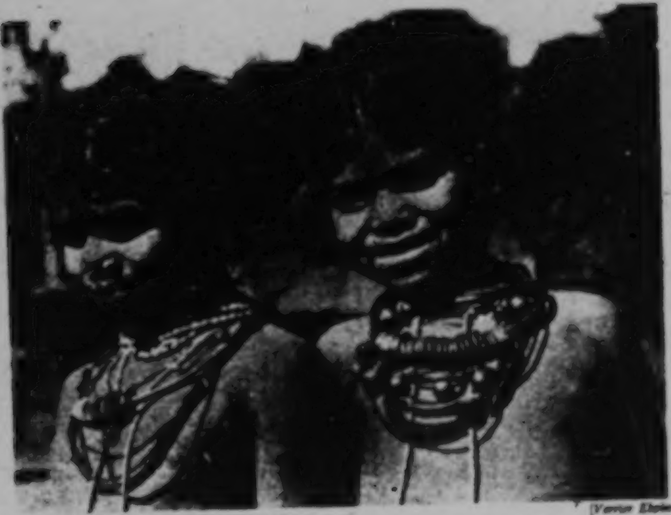
Verrier Elwin

Bison-horn Maria dancer

[End Plate E]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

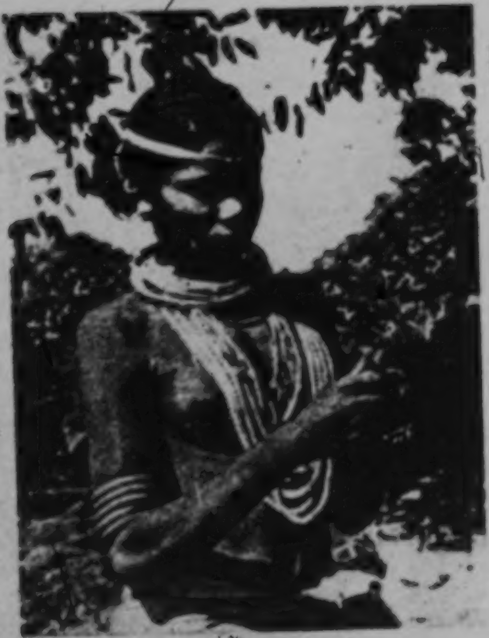
142
301
304



[Verrier Elwin

Hill Maria children

142
301



Muchaki Kondi, Bison-horn Maria girl, of Burgum

[Verrier Elwin

[End Plate F]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

142
291
516
301

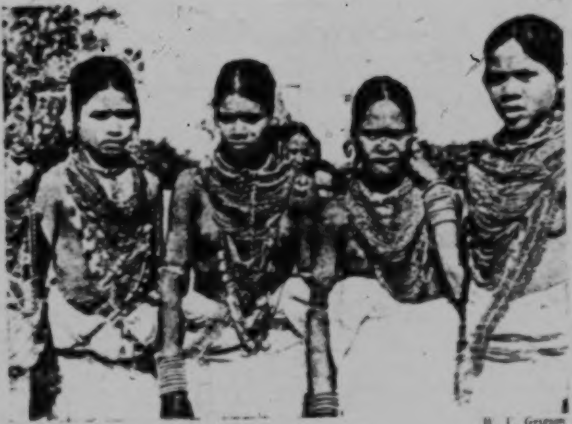
(Verrier Elwin

Bison-horn Maria girl of Mohlipal

[End Plate 6]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

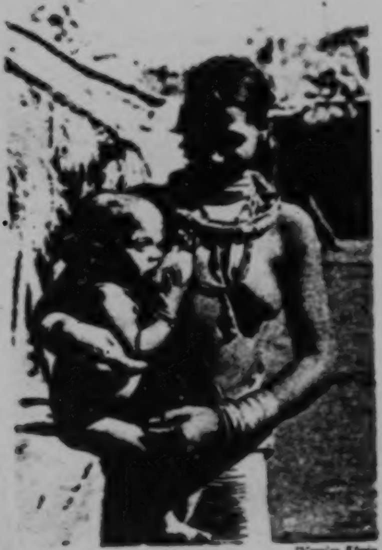
142
291
301



W. V. Grigson

Group of Maria girls from Lahiri
Chanda district

142
291
301
853
854



[Verrier Elwin

Hill Maria mother
and child

[End Plate H]

415
516

[Verrier Elwin

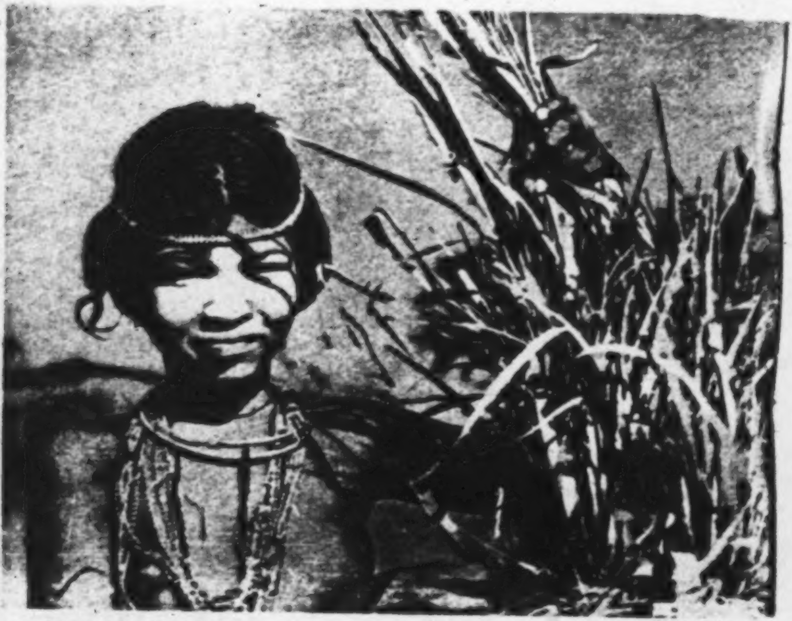
Marvi Bhima and Muchaki Kondi making leaf-cups at Borgum

[End Plate I]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

142
301



Bison-horn Maria girl brings in the harvest

[Verrier Elwin

[End Plate J]

Bison-horn Maria women making a mat

[Verrier Elwin

[End Plate K]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

231
343

[Verrier Elwin

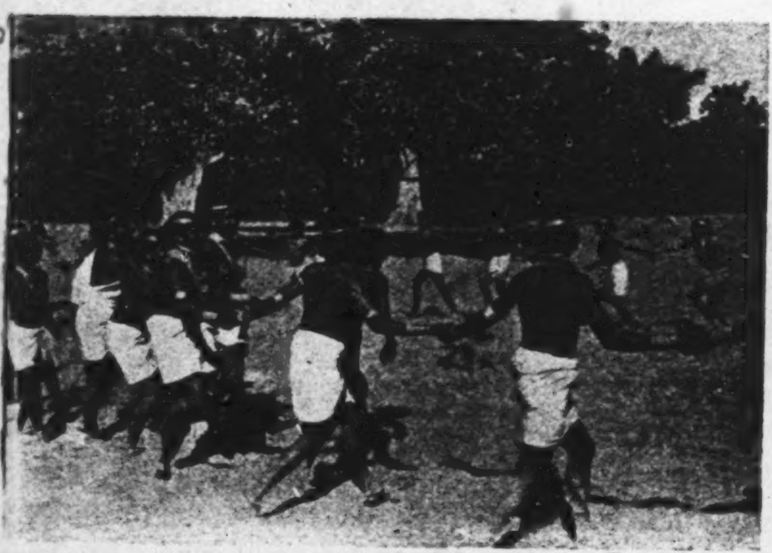
Bison-horn Marias at Bastanar struggle to get a goat into its shed

[End Plate L]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

526



Bison-horn Maria girls playing games at Mokhpal

[Verrier Elwin

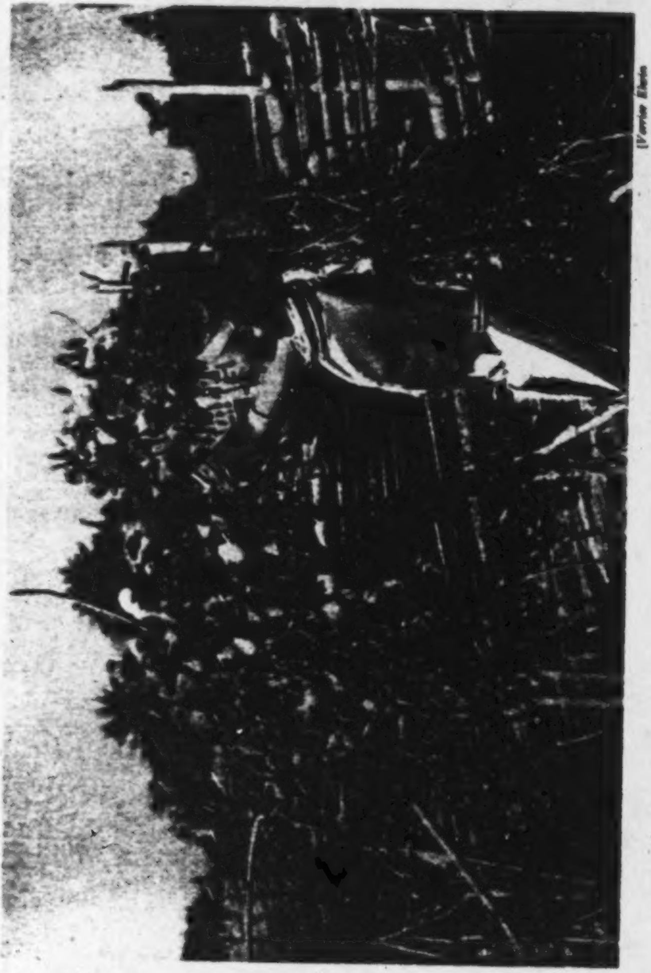
[End Plate M]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

231
241



[Verrier Elwin

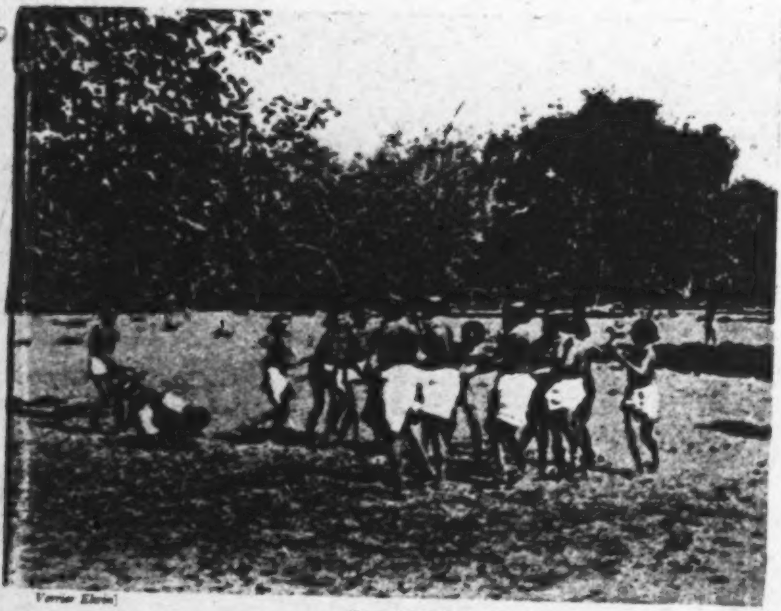
Bison-horn Maria girl feeds a parrot on a bean-vine at Mukhpal

[End Plate N]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

526



Verrier Elwin]

Bison-horn Maria girls playing games at Mokhpal

[End Plate O]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

846
415
515

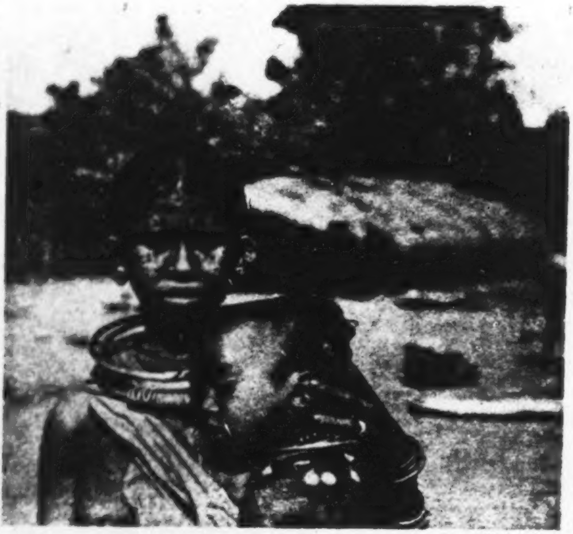
Verrier Elwin

Bison-born Maria mother with her newly-born child at Maranda. Note the arrow driven into the ground where the placenta is buried, and the stone for bathing

[End Plate P]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

301
304
854



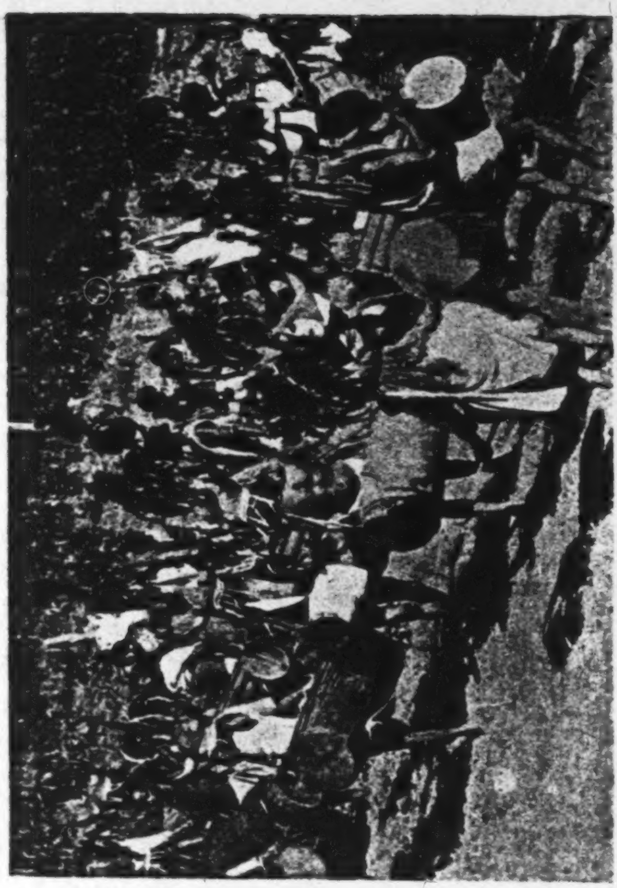
[Verrier Elwin

Jugho Chero, of Itulnar, shown in Plate VI (*facing p. 70*), photographed ten years later

[End Plate Q]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria



• Bison-horn Marias dancing

[Verrier Elwin

[End Plate R]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

535

Bison-horn Marias dancing

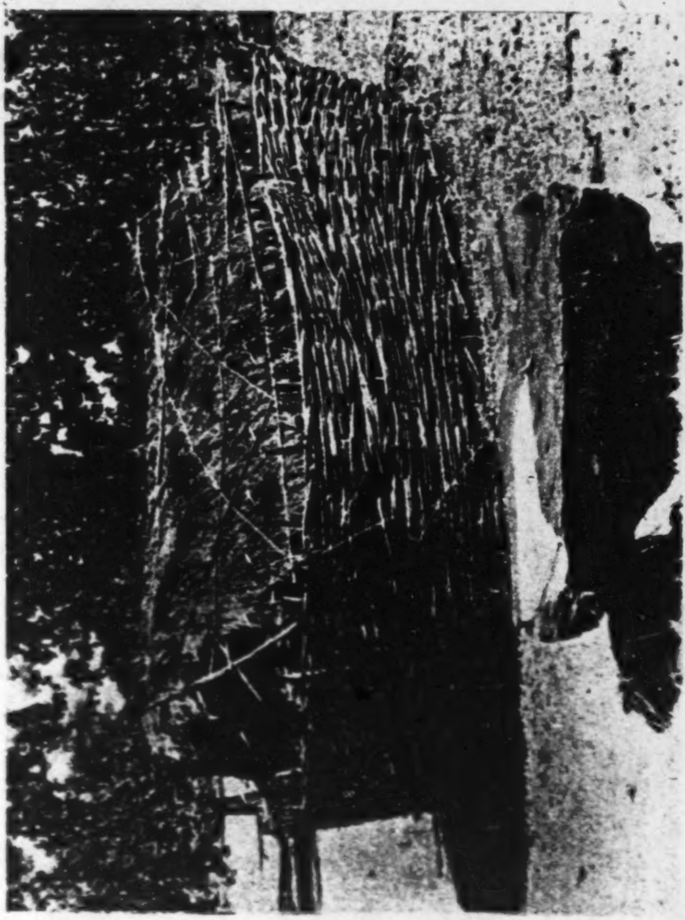
[Verrier Elwin

[End Plate 5]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

764



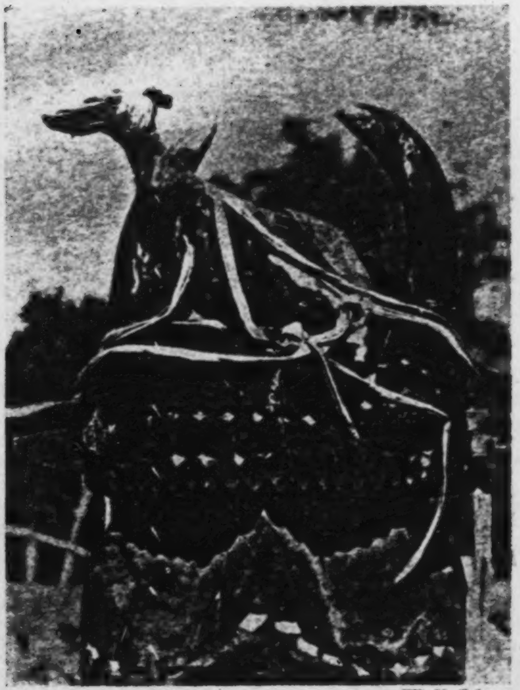
[Verrier Elwin

Bison-horn tomb with danyakal stone in front, at Palnar

[End Plate T]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

764
532



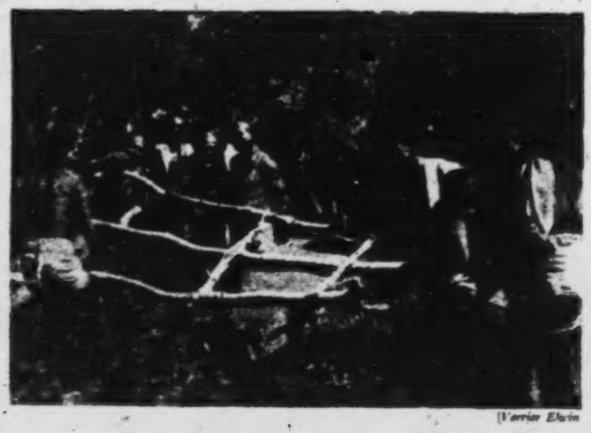
[W. V. Grigson

The top of a Maria funerary post (*kanal-gutta*) at Lahiri, Chanda district

[End Plate 4]

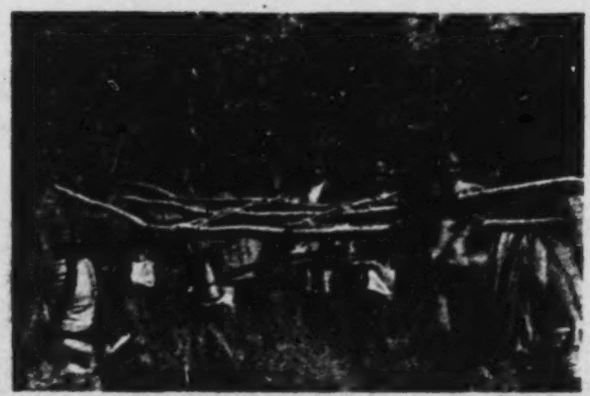
1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

764
483



[Verrier Elwin

Scenes at the erection of a menhir at Massenar



[Verrier Elwin

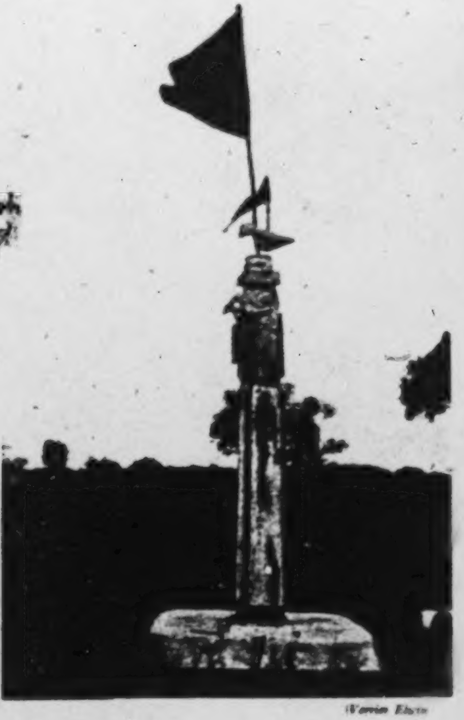
[End Plate V]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

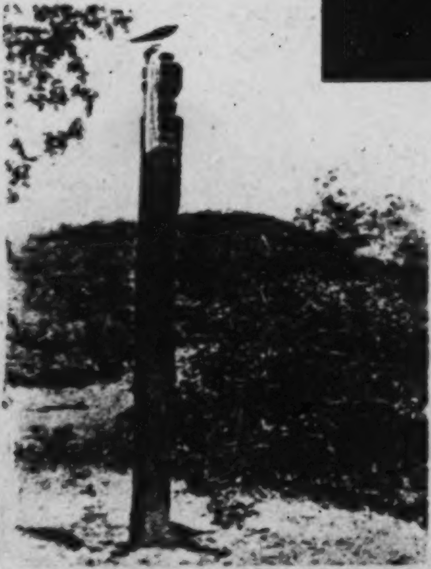
764
532

Memorial pillar
at Bare Acapur



(Verrier Elwin)

(Verrier Elwin)

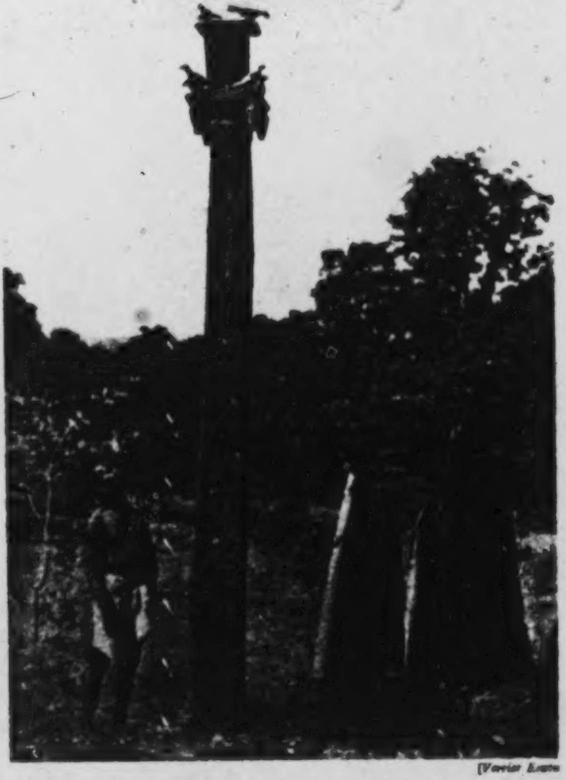


Memorial pillar (for members of the Lekhami clan) near Chinger. Note the cromlech at the base

[End Plate W]

I: Grigson G-5. (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

764
532



[Verrier Elwin

Memorial pillar for Barse Marka at Barrem

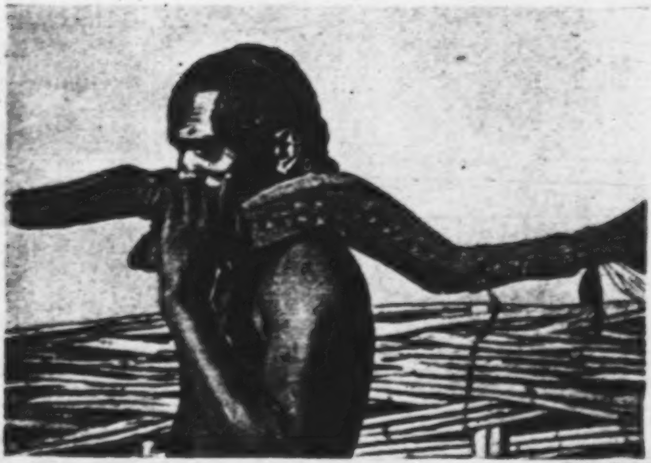
[End Plate X]

782
516

After the Census, the Marias took the house-numbering boards outside their villages and sacrificed pigs to them in order to avert the danger of numbering the people

[End Plate Y]

532
778
482



[Verrier Elwin

Tati Mundra of Tikampal, with the ' wooden ' horse or ' vehicle ' of the Tati clan-god Hunga

[End Plate Z]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

535
522

[Verrier Elwin

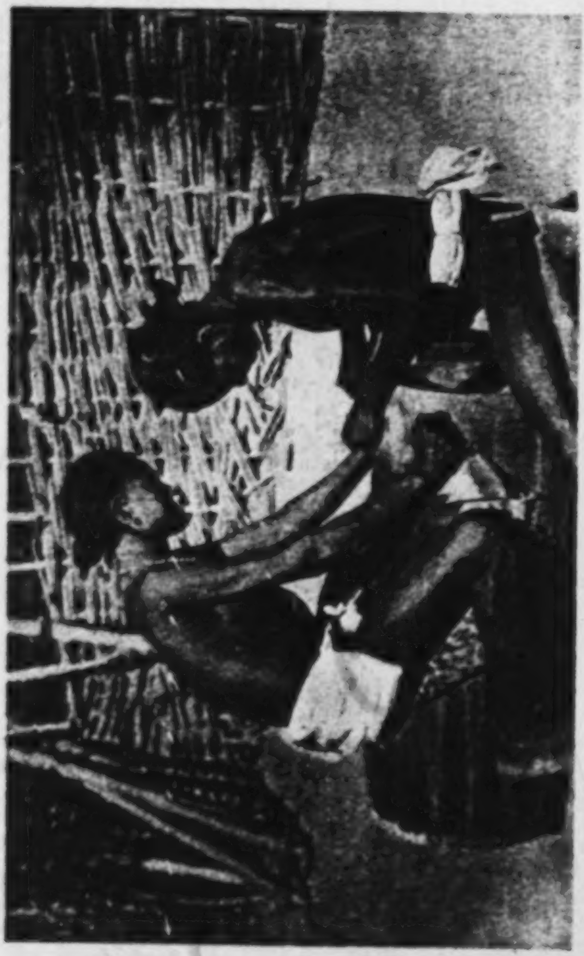
Bison-horn Maria clown, covered with glistening mud, postures during a dance

[End Plate 2A]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

534
417
302



[Verrier Elwin

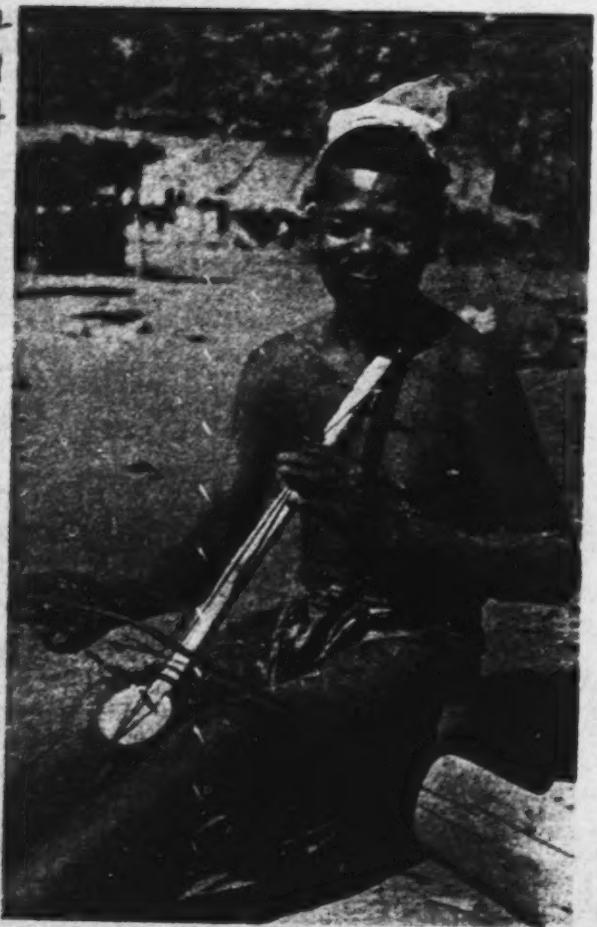
Bison-horn Maria boys repair a drum

[End Plate ZB]

2

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

142
291
534



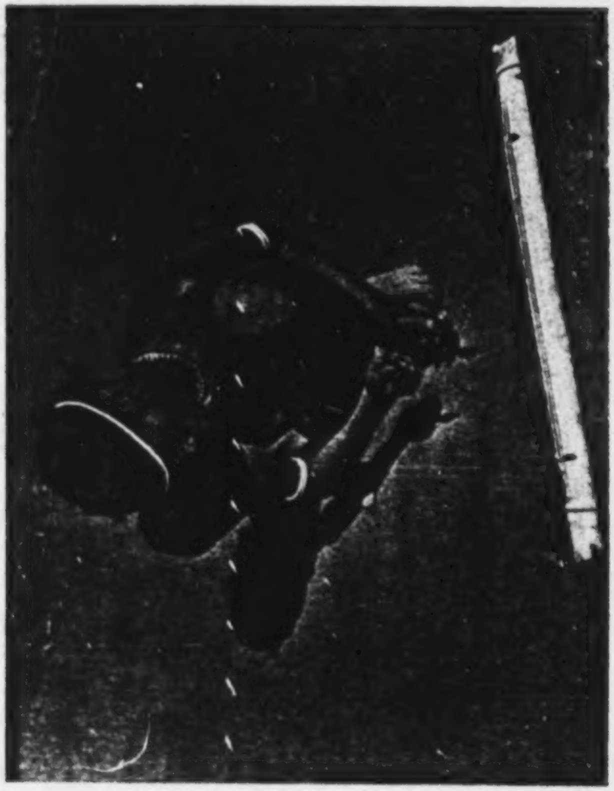
[Verrier Elwin

Hill Maria playing stringed instrument

[End Plate ZC]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

534
516



Verrier Elwin

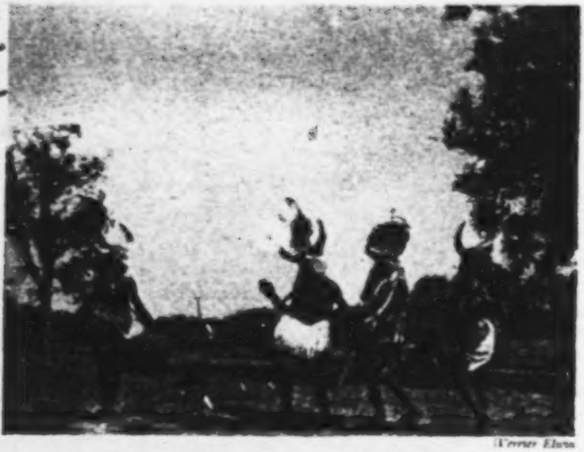
Hill Maria youth playing a *veddur-dol*

[End Plate ZD]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

534
535
292



[Verrier Elwin

Bison-horn Marias dancing

[Verrier Elwin

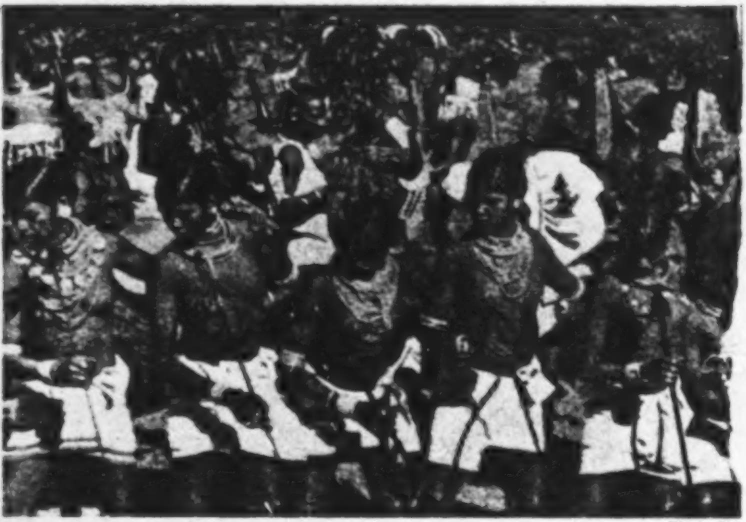
[End Plnte ZE]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

535



[Verrier Elwin

Bison-horn Maria girls dancing

[End Plate ZF]